CICELY;

OR

THE ROSE OF RABY.

An Historic Novel.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY AGNES MUSGRAVE,

AUTHOR OF EDMUND OF THE FOREST, CONFESSION, WILLIAM DE MONTFORT, &c. &c.

THIRD EDITION.

VOL. I.

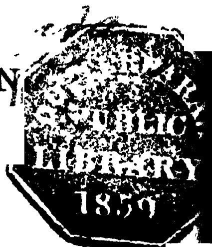
London:

Printed at the Minerva Press for

A. K. NEWMAN AND CO. LEADENHALL-STREET.

1816.

INTRODUCTION.



WAS I to read the history of a person so distinguished as the lady Cicely, I should turn to the preface, wondering how her memoirs could come into the hands of the publisher. To those who may enjoy as large a share of the legacy bequeathed to all the daughters of our grandmother Eve, all shades and all complexions, I address the following account, which (if they believe it) will authenticate my veracity through the remainder of the story.

Confined, several winters ago, to my apartment, by an illness which prevented me for months from seeking amusement from without, I bethought myself of a box which stood in an adjoining closet; it had been my grandmother's, and I had often heard her say, it contained papers of great importance, bequeathed her by her aunt Musgrave: frequently attempting to search this trunk, I found its mouldering contents too severely exercise my patience; but setting about accomplishing my purpose seriously, I carefully examined each paper in its order, and found they were letters addressed to a lady of the noble family of Lumley; many of them from the duchesses of York and Clarence, countess of Warwick, &c. some few from Anne, the queen of Richard the Third; those the most mutilated were written by Edward

Edward the Fourth, and all their dates were confined between the years 1440 and 1500.

At the bottom of the trunk, amongst many other papers of some importance, were two thick rolls, one of which appeared to be almost illegible, whilst the other was in excellent preservation, to which was affixed a label, that informed me those papers contained the history of the lady Cicely, daughter to the great earl of Westmoreland and the countess Joan.

On opening them, there appeared a letter addressed to the aunt Musgrave I have already mentioned, which was dated 1670, and signed Matilda Musgrave, in which she first acquaints her daughter with family concerns and domestic anecdotes; but among the principal circumstances, charges her care-

fully to preserve this trunk, which is minutely described, and its contents, all of which formerly belonged to the lady Matilda Lumley—"Being," says she, "when a child, with my mother, at the castle of Lumley (which you may have heard me describe for its beautiful situation, on the banks of the river Were, a few miles from Durham), when one day, ranging with all the curiosity natural to my years, through its spacious apartments, I was struck with the figures of the tapestry in one of them, and stopping to admire it, found it hung loose from the wall; lifting the hangings, I discovered a door, which in vain I endeavoured to open. Charmed with the accident, I ran to my mother, who quickly followed me back, and pulling from her pocket a key, opened the door; she

appeared lost in thought, as we proceeded into a gothic apartment; my attention was soon attracted by two pictures—'Tell me, my dear mother,' I said, 'who does this represent?' pointing to one whose beauty and sensibility of countenance had particularly struck me.

'That is,' replied my mother, 'the duchess of York, who lived during the wars between that rival house and Lancaster; from the latter she was descended; she was mother to Edward the Fourth and Richard the Third, and grandmother to the princess Elizabeth of York, who married Henry the Seventh, from whom our sovereign, queen Elizabeth, is descended, and James of Scotland. The other picture is Matilda of Lumley, the chosen friend of the duchess: my mother was brought up by this venerable lady at the castle,

to whom, at her death, she bequeathed all her papers and valuables.

'After the death of lady Matilda, my mother was debarred from the exercise of that religion in which she had been carefully educated; in this secret closet she spent much of her time in its duties; it had been the chosen retirement of the lady Matilda, whose name the adjoining room still bears; but when my mother married, she disobliged the noble family from whom she was descended, and never again entered the gates of Lumley. Irritated at being thus renounced, she resolved the manuscripts of the lady Matilda should crumble to dust, rather than they should fall into the hands of lord Lumley. Oft with tears would she relate some of the various scenes her beloved protectress had mingled in, oft repeat her maxims, and ere she died,

giving

giving me these keys, minutely described this closet, earnestly requesting, if ever in my power, I should endeavour to repossess the secret contents of this retired closet, and urged it as I loved and reverenced her memory. In vain, till now, have been my attempts, as my visits to the family were short, and only those of ceremony: at length Fortune has befriended my wishes.

'I received an invitation for a longer stay; oft, though without success, I have sought for this closet, owing, I presume, to some alteration in the passage leading to the adjoining apartments.'

"She ceased speaking, and with an impressive solemnity, unlocked the beautiful cabinet—'This,' said she, 'once belonged to the duchess—here are the arms of the Nevilles—here are

the broom cocks of the Plantagenets, as you may perceive afterwards added. From this she took many valuable trifles, and amongst the rest a white rose; my mother looked wistfully on it, and bursting into tears, sighed out, 'Bloody! bloody distinction!' The exclamation struck me, and though I scarce knew why, I also wept. At different times, I assisted my mother in conveying away all the papers, when the door was again locked, and our discovery passed unnoticed; but the following year, James of Scotland succeeding Elizabeth, great preparations were made at Lumley for receiving him; the tapestry being pulled down, the large closet was discovered, and added to the apartment in which the king slept." The letter finishes with charges of secresy, which had been so faithfully obeyed, that a century must

must have elapsed since the papers had been exposed to daylight.

With eagerness I began to peruse the story of lady Cicely, but found the style and the writing so unlike any thing we of late have been accustomed to, that at first it failed to interest; many names were entirely erased, and all had been struck through with a pen; the second part, in particular, was so injured by damp, that for many pages I could scarce read one sentence; however, at that time having nothing more important to occupy my hours, leisure induced me to copy the story; showing the fruits of this industry to a friend, he promised the next summer to visit some relations of mine in the North—"Go with me," said he, "I will then accompany you to the places described; let us endeavour to find whether or not it is probable this narrative

narrative was written by the lady Cicely. True, it speaks of many things mentioned by our historians, yet such an air of romance hangs over it, and so many strange adventures are intermingled, I know not what to believe. Thus, though the earl of Westmoreland was warden of the Scottish marches about 1414, yet no history I ever read informed me his life was saved by Percy; nor is it in the least probable, Louis, duke of Orleans, long surviving his assassination, at length lost his life on the shore of England. Then the account given of lady Warwick—can we suppose, if such a character existed, that so important a charge should ever be committed to her, or that during so long an absence, a prisoner of such consequence as the duke of Orleans would not be missed, in spite of all manœuvres to conceal it? The

strange

strange mixture of superstition, I can better allow for; its influence was then powerful, and those pretended visions and prophecies might in a great measure fix her fate. Eleanor, duchess of Gloucester, was, we know, openly accused of witchcraft—a positive proof of the ignorance and credulity of the times; faith too was put in pretended prophecies—witness Richard the Third, who had been told he would not long survive the sight of Richmond, which prophecy he is said to have believed, and was accomplished at Bosworth.

We went our journey at the projected time, and first visited Raby, in vain seeking the remains of the Saxon castle, yet we fixed an imaginary spot for its situation, as also the cell of lord Beauchamp, and pitched upon the apartment we supposed Cicely to have occupied. It was with mingled sensations

sations of pleasure and reverence we viewed the ruined castle of Barnard, where once the ensign of the Beauchamps, and that of the Nevilles, as well as the silver boar of Richard, had waved in triumph over its ivy-clad towers.

Looking through its broken windows, we fully comprehended the beauty of the wild, romantic view, described by the duke of Orleans: yet while we were gratified by viewing the remains of its ancient strength and grandeur, and felt charmed by the surrounding prospect, nothing certified to us here was the spot where Richard found the letters of his father—here was the apartment of the duchess of York—this was the place where stood the closet of the earl of Warwick.

The neighbouring monastery of Athelstan still bears the arms of the

Fitzhughs,

Fitzhughs—a certain proof they had been benefactors to it; the castle of this ancient family, beautifully and romantically situated on the banks of the river Tees, scarce presented us with a vestige to say, here lords and ladies feasted, or listened to tales of heroic deeds, in days when love and chivalry went hand in hand; here we dropped a tear to the memory of the fair Theresa, the stately castle of whose ancestors was mouldered away by the hand of Time, till scarce its site could be traced. The tomb of the family still exists in the ancient parish church of Romaldkirk, which we visited.

The river still pouring down the rock forms a cataract, but no wood adorns its sides, nor could we discover any cave large enough for the residence of father Ambrose.

At Lumley, we were shown the chamber

chamber in which James the First slept, and lamented that this honour had deprived us of all certain proof; but looked from a window I supposed might have belonged to the closet of the lady Matilda, with a degree of enthusiastic pleasure, and rivetted my eyes upon two portraits, that might be supposed, from the style of painting, and elegance of features, to be the duchess and her friend.

At Tynemouth, after viewing its light and elegant remains with a kind of suppressed awe, and imagining we might be standing on the very spot occupied by Cicely about three hundred years ago, we almost supposed ourselves following the monks, slowly winding up the hill with their pious burthen, and remarked that it must have been on such a rock as then we saw uncovered by the sea, that the ves-

sel

sel had split; when procuring a person to dig before the spot where once the high altar stood, we discovered a tombstone, on which we clearly made out the inscription mentioned by Cicely; this was the only proof we could obtain, and desisted from going, as we had proposed, to Hexham, or Naworth and Warkworth Castles.

I could hear of no castle on the banks of the Loire which bore the name of Bidet, the ancient castle of Blois, which belonged to the count bearing that title; it was given to Louis, duke of Orleans, by his father, Charles the Fifth, but it corresponds only in being seated on the same river.

In an ancient monastery which overlooks a small harbour, on the coast of Portugal, a friend of mine was shown the tomb of an English knight, whose arms he thinks are the same as those at Athelstan Abbey; the date is 1418.

My

My friends flattering me, by saying I was competent to the task, urged me to set about changing the antique dress in which I found the narrative of lady Cicely, careful of not altering the story, nor deviating from the style, but to make it merely modern enough to be interesting: at length I finished it, though not without much pains, and am now enabled to lay it before the public, who perhaps may think I have been only misemploying time, or that nature never destined me for such a work; however, to their perusal it is now dedicated, and their award must determine whether Cicely of Raby shall be once more admired as a favourite, or sink again with her ashes into entire oblivion, unnoticed and forgotten.

CICELY OF RABY.

HAD it been possible to have refused a request made by Matilda Lumley, I would have done so, when my beloved friend, at parting, begged me to gratify her fond curiosity, by giving the regular detail of a life she was conscious had been chequered by many a scene, as strange as various. Alas! already do you know, Matilda, how great have been the sufferings which oft your friendship has kindly soothed—oft indeed shared.—Yes, for you will I trace times past, actions long buried in oblivion; to you will I speak of what was once most dear;

 of

of those whose sad remains the senseless earth has long been mingled with; yet in gratifying your curiosity, sensibility and friendship will have paid too severe a tribute, and whilst you weep for my misfortunes, because you love me, will feel yourself fatigued by the dull narration, unenlivened by the graces of description.

Was it not that you wished for a regular history of my life, it would be needless (descended as you are from the house of Raby, and almost living constantly with some of its branches) for me to say that I was born of a family distinguished for its opulence, the number of its retainers, and its splendid connexions; that my father, Ralph, earl of Westmoreland, married early in life, the daughter of the earl of Stafford, by whom he had nine children; whilst by his second wife, Joan, daughter of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, and Huthenne Swinford, the duke's third wife, the earl was father of thirteen sons and daughters.

The

The alliance of the family of Neville was sought with eagerness by each powerful baron, and the fair daughters of the house of Raby were celebrated through every country, while their beauty was the loved subject of each minstrel's song. Some of my sisters were nobly settled in marriage ere I was born, whose connexions still farther increased the power of the earl and the pride of the countess; both attached to pomp, they lived in a style almost regal; the marriages of my brothers with the rich heiresses of different noble families aggrandized the house of Neville, which at length became too great for subjects.

My infantine years I shall trace slightly; they were principally spent in the castles of Brancepeth and Raby, both in the county of Durham, wandering through their extensive parks, heedless of the future evil, little dreaming that those days, gilded by the sunshine of health and youth—days when care did not intrude to whisper lurk-

ing mischief—should be the only ones of a long life I would wish to recall. Happy, happy days! too soon ye fled—Yes, Matilda, even when a mere child was I plunged into adventures that might have appalled the stoutest.

How did my heart bound at the summons, when I, who was the youngest of the family, was ordered to accompany my two elder sisters from Brancepeth to Raby! Already were the earl and countess arrived, and my brother Edward with his bride, the fair heiress of Abergavenny, hourly expected.

The diversions we eagerly expected, and the wish to see our new sister, occupied every thought, and engrossed our conversation, till we reached Raby. As yet I had been secluded from all but my own family and dependants; too young to mix in the splendid circles that assembled in the spacious halls of Raby and Brancepeth, my heart beat at the scenes of pleasure I fondly fancied were unveiling to my view. Delusive phantoms of pleasure and of power! how have

have you mocked me! continually buzzing round a mere pageant of happiness, that scarce ever found its way to my heart!

In the morning I attended my mother, who gave me instructions for my behaviour on being introduced to lady Abergavenny; impatiently I listened to accounts of forms so burdensome; yet methought, if this be required of me, ere I can join those gay, happy circles in which my sisters mix, it is trifling to the pleasure lurking behind them. But, Matilda, soon I felt my heart was not formed for ceremony that palled, and that parade the countess doted on.

At length came the day I was to behold the bride. Six pages announced her approach; the earl and countess, followed by my two sisters, three of my brothers, and myself, with a long train of dependants, met the cavalcade at the park-gates. The minstrels complimented her arrival; Edward advanced with his lovely spouse, and both fell at the feet of lord and lady Westmoreland, who raising, bestowed their

blessings upon them. I was charmed by the manner of our new relation, equally so at the idea of splendid gaieties that awaited her stay at Raby, whose hospitable gates were thrown open to all ranks—all was a scene of festivity and joy—each day rose and closed on fresh amusement.

One morning, when the sun had risen with peculiar lustre (for it was spring), gilding each turret of the castle with his beams, Eleanor and I were tempted to stroll into the park by ourselves; slowly we were on our return marking the tender foliage, and gathering the bursting blossom of the early primrose and unobtrusive violet, when the sound of a horn made us start; scarce could we turn round ere a page threw himself off his horse, and kneeling gracefully, demanded if the castle he saw was not that of Raby? Before we could answer, we beheld, mounted on a beautiful steed, an elegant youth, and beside him an aged warrior, on whose arms was emblazoned the cross; he seemed to be overpowered

ered by fatigue. The youth dismounted and advanced towards us, with a grace and dignity superior to any thing I had ever seen, although all the noble youth of the North had lately been guests at Raby— "Ah!" he exclaimed, "you can be no other than daughters of the house of Neville, for such your mien bespeaks you! pity, ah! pity an unfortunate wanderer!—those fair forms cannot be void of feeling. Outcast from friends and fortune, you behold the heir of Northumberland, the son of Hotspur, come to claim the protection of the earl of Westmoreland."

Eleanor, who was tenderness itself, begged him to proceed with the aged knight to the castle, who, endeavouring to dismount in order to pay his respects to us, fell to the ground; nor was it in the power of Percy to raise him—"Alas!" he cried, "my venerable friend, why did your zeal for me expose you to this? what perils yet may surround us!"

"No," returned the sinking warrior, "I

dread no further danger, now we are in the domains of lord Westmoreland—I shall die contented—I have fulfilled my promise. No longer can this feeble arm be raised in defence of your house; my noble friend will grant you an asylum; nor do I doubt the clemency of Henry will reverse the attainder, and restore again its ancient lustre to the house of Percy."

Amazed at what we heard, we seemed deprived of exertion, till I cried to Eleanor —"Let us haste to the castle ere it is too late, and send assistance." Our feet scarce seemed to touch the ground; animated by the romantic appearance of this little adventure, we sought the earl (after sending servants to assist the enfeebled knight), and found him, attended by my brothers, prepared for the chase. With a pleading countenance and pathetic voice, Eleanor recounted our meeting with Percy, who, we saw, had now advanced with his friend as far as the moat—"Go, my child," said the earl to the blushing Eleanor, "conduct

duct Percy hither, whilst the attendants bear his companion to a chamber."

My sister soon returned, led by the graceful youth; entering the hall where we were, with an air of dignified nobleness, he knelt to the earl, who raised and embraced him—"Accept," said he, "ere you condescend to entreat it, the asylum you seek: but say, why left you Scotland? why visit Raby? Know you not, rash youth, the countess of Westmoreland was sister to him your father raised the arm of rebellion against at Shrewsbury?"

"Yes," in haste returned Percy; "but were not, ere that, the families of Neville and of Percy strictly united? am not I descended from the noble house of Raby? The last commands of the earl of Northumberland were, that I should not quit Scotland whilst Henry the Fourth lived—'but when you do,' said he, 'cast yourself upon the generosity of my ancient ally, the earl of Westmoreland; tell him, it is the last

request of dying Percy—he who at his side fought for Henry of Bolingbroke—that he will protect the house he loved—yes, my child, I confide in his friendship, nor will he brand thee, innocent as thou art, with the ignominious name of traitor."

The feelings of the youthful heir seemed almost to convulse him, whilst the earl turned aside to wipe the tear which stole down his cheek to the memory of his unfortunate friend.

"Yes," exclaimed my father, as he took the hand of the young hero, "I swear by all the dangers I have shared with your grandfather, by all the ties I swear, by which our houses have been united, that here you shall be safe and honoured: but you want ease and refreshment."

"Ah! my lord, perhaps even now my aged guardian breathes his last."

"Let us go," said the earl.

They immediately rushed to an inner chamber, where, stretched on a couch, lay the

the expiring warrior; near him stood, clad in sacred vestments, the holy priest, pronouncing words of comfort.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed my father, "is it beneath my roof thou art to die—thou who trainedst my early valour to feats of arms!"

As our presence might be irksome, Eleanor withdrew, and I followed; but ere the evening, from the neighbouring steeple we heard the sound of death.

Percy retired to an apartment provided for his reception; his image and his dying friend completely absorbed the attention of Eleanor and myself; we talked of an ad venture, indelibly impressed upon our minds, till a late hour. Nor did our fancy rest even then; still in our dreams we viewed the gallant youth; and the sun no sooner gilded our window with its beams, than we arose to visit again the place where Percy knelt to us. How enthusiastic is the young mind! already had we endowed our hero with every perfec-

 tion;

tion; all the noble qualities of the race from which he sprung, imagination painted on his countenance.

"Here," said Eleanor, "he fell at our feet, and stooping, "Cicely," said she, "here are the flowers we had gathered—they dropped when we beheld him; I will preserve them in remembrance of a youth so charming."

The earl advanced to us.

"Here, my lord," said I, "it was we first saw Percy; may we ask who was his companion?"

"It was Widdrington," replied the earl, "the tried friend of this youth's grandsire; he shared all his counsels, partook of all his distress; to his care Northumberland left young Percy. Weary of his dependence on the duke of Albany, Percy could be no longer restrained from obeying the commands of his ancestor, and hastened to throw himself upon the hospitality of the ancient ally of his family, promising the governor to return against a certain day, could

could he not procure pardon for himself, and liberty for Murdock, the duke's son, who has been a prisoner in England ever since the bloody battle of Hamildon. Mutual pledges given and received, and hostages left of tried worth and attachment to the Percys, he quitted Scotland, accompanied by the brave Widdrington and a single page. Hastily crossing Northumberland, at nightfall the second day they reached Brancepeth, when hearing we were at Raby, they had proceeded without stopping for refreshment; worn out by fatigue, the brave Widdrington scarce had strength left to conduct him hither. Ah! for thy sake would I, my gallant friend, guard thy youthful charge!"

Here a cloud crossed the countenance of our father; the recollection pressed on his memory, that he who had been the counsellor of his youthful days lay extended, a pale corpse, in the castle whose wall had oft echoed to his voice. The earl hastily left

left us; I looked at Eleanor, who now sobbed aloud—"Ah, Cicely! my mother."

"What of her, my sister?"

"Never, never will she consent to shield thee, Percy; I see my father dreads her opposition; did you not watch his eye? But here (dropping on her knees) I swear, inviolably swear——"

"What, Eleanor, do you mean?"

"Ah, what indeed!" said she, deeply blushing as she rose; "has not the earl sworn by every sacred tie to protect him? and though our princely mother may resent, justly resent the rebellion of the Percys against the house of Lancaster, will she overlook the merit, the innocence, the loveliness, of this graceful youth?"

Entering the castle we met the countess, who chided us for long absence, and we remarked to each other that a more than usual *hauteur* sat on her countenance.

After the interment of his guardian knight, Percy mingled, from politeness, in all

all the diversions which surrounded him, yet appeared oppressed by melancholy; nor did he ever betray one gleam of cheerfulness, unless when riding by the side of Eleanor, or accompanying us in the early rambles we often indulged in. My sister seemed to have caught the infection; she was absent and reserved; the gay, the lively Eleanor, whose wit and raillery gave inspiration to every topic, charmed no longer in social chat or livelier revelry; absorbed in hidden grief, the hours devoted to rest were spent in sighs and tears— "What means this change? Ah, my sister, you no longer love your Cicely, who would die to make you happy! are you ill, and fear to alarm me? no, no, some latent mischief lurks in your mind: have I ever betrayed your secrets? I am young, yet if I know any thing of love, and in that passion nature is a ready artist, you love Harry Percy; yes, Eleanor, all you once felt for the deserted Cicely is transferred to him;

him; still, still regard me—he can never, never indeed, love you more than I do."

I sobbed aloud—Eleanor joined her tears to mine, discovering her love more by sighs than language, entreating me to pity and forgive her—"Never," said she, "has he ventured to reveal a love which every look, every action, proclaims he feels." Oh Cicely! he is miserable; the earl, it is true, treats him with kindness, with distinction; but the countess, it is but too visible, esteems it her duty to preserve the enmity of her brother towards the outcast heir of Northumberland; and it is only in compliance with her lord she receives him with the bare rites of common hospitality. Percy," continued my sister, "is weary of a life which he laments as a burden to himself, because useless to society; sometimes he meditates returning to Scotland, a banished man; at others, to cast himself at the feet of Henry, whose clemency, he hopes, would remember that his house had been

been the chief means of seating his father on the throne of England—'Yes,' will he cry, 'the generous king must allow that to outweigh a hasty fault.'"

I tried to comfort Eleanor, by urging it as probable that my father waited but the consent of our mother to prostrate himself at the foot of the throne and entreat a pardon for his amiable guest.

You will perhaps wonder why Eleanor should make me, who was but a mere child, her confidant; it was, I believe, owing to a similarity of dispositions. Ann was of a temper which concentered all the forbidding parts of our mother's character, without those graces of manner which adorned her. Although in every action the countess seemed to impress you with an idea of her high descent, yet affable to her inferiors, she tempered her *hauteur* with the charms of a finished address—not so Ann; the whole world she seemed to suppose but created for her service. No wonder the gentle Eleanor revolted from a

breast

breast so uncongenial to her own; nor could her high-wrought sensibility meet its kindred mind in Jane, whose impetuous passions broke through all opposition; she indeed at this time was alone with us at Raby, Ann being with our sister, lady Scroope, at Bolton.

My brother and his bride quitting Raby, we all removed to Brancepeth, where the health of Eleanor seemed declining apace; her disorder baffled the skill of the physicians, who, after exhausting all the resources of art, recommended, as usual, a change of place.

It was now autumn; the earl being warden of the Scottish marches, was often obliged to hold his residence in a castle on the borders; thither Percy always attended him: Eleanor went to visit the earl at this castle, accompanied by Jane and myself, with a train of attendants, more apparently for parade than security, as at that time all was peace there.

The countess parted with us at Newcastle.

tle, where she declared her resolution to wait our return; bidding her adieu, we hoped to reach Bothal Castle ere noon, where the earl was to meet us. In safety, it is true, we reached Bothal; but instead of seeing our father, a courier from him informed us he was greatly hurt by leaping a ditch in the pursuit of a robber, and ordered us not to proceed till a stronger escort than what we had should conduct us securely.

More impatient to reach the borders after hearing this, and fearless of danger, we took a hasty refreshment and set out, hoping, as it was yet very early in the day, we might reach before night the lord warden. But ere we accomplished our journey, the delicate frame of Eleanor was so overcome by fatigue she could scarce support herself; yet still she persevered.

The moon had just risen in all her lustre, after a very foggy evening, when we entered a thick wood, through which we must pass before we reached the castle; the

the gloom that frowned upon us seemed to cast a kind of dread over our little troop, which was not diminished by hearing the wood re-echo with Scottish voices, and the trampling of men and horses. Uncertain which road to take to avoid the danger, we made a stand, till Jane exalting her voice, cried, " Push forward!" As we reached the verge of the forest, we found ourselves encompassed by a band of Scottish plunderers; the moon shone on the armour of their leader, whose savage visage left us no room to hope for mercy. I screamed with terror, whilst the already-exhausted Eleanor fainted. Jane, no way dismayed, ordered our attendants to wind their horns, hoping the sound might reach, ere it died on the breeze, the ears of those who guarded the castle of the lord warden.

The leader of the Scots rode up to Jane to take her prisoner, with his sword laid across the bow of the saddle; already had he seized the reins, when she snatched the sword, and striking with all her might at

the

the hand that detained her—"You shall repent," said she, "your audacity;" then urging her steed to its utmost speed, soon outstripped her pursuer, who seemed at first deprived of motion, so astonished were they at a resistance so little expected.

In vain did our troop endeavour to defend the insensible Eleanor, and me more miserable, for I was alive to danger and all its fears. Eleanor was lifted before the Scottish chief; this motion brought her to life, and she faintly exclaimed—"Ah, my father! ah, lord Westmoreland!" then relapsed into her former state. When our whole party were bound, we prepared to set forward for Scotland, but were overtaken by some horsemen, who called aloud to our enemies to abandon their captives; they were too confident to comply, and a fierce conflict ensued; the Scottish leader retired hastily with my sister, when a gallant youth, whose arm had achieved wonders, turned his horse from the fray and pursued them. In the voice I recognised

Harry

Harry Percy, as, with accents fierce and determined, he demanded the traitor to give up his lovely prize, or expect a death as terrible as his presumption was insolent.

"Not to thee!" cried the Scot, indignantly: "go, boy—thou art beneath my valour! my revenge is directed at him who slew our brave chief; tell me where I shall find him; then perhaps you may take this damsel, whose timid soul, unused to deeds of hardihood, is fled already."

"Turn, thou base coward, turn! know," cried Percy, "it was I who slew your chief—I, blusterer!—let your deeds speak valour—your words at best are air, light as your courage."

The voice of Percy roused the fainting maid, who, loosened from the villain's grasp, fell to the ground; happily deprived of sense, she saw not how severe the conflict was; but Percy, though deeply wounded, was at length triumphant. Eleanor was recalled to life by the attentions of her deliverer, who attempting to seat

her

her on his horse, staggered beneath his lovely burthen, faint with loss of blood, and sunk as it were for ever on the earth —" Ah, Percy! you are wounded, dying," exclaimed Eleanor, in agonized distress— " dying for her who would suffer ten thousand deaths to save you!"

She flung herself by him—" Oh speak, if yet you can speak—tell me you curse me not!—alas! too sure I am your murderer!"

Even the sound of a voice so dear to his heart scarce could he distinguish; a sickly mist hung over him; that ear which oft had greedily listened to each accent of my sister seemed to be closing for ever. Opening his eyes, as if to take a last look of an object so dear, he faintly cried—" Oh my adored Eleanor, this is the happiest moment I have known!—a wretched exile, durst I stretch my hopes to the daughter of my protector? Has ought, my beloved lady, but my eyes ever told you to what an excess I have adored you?

Heaven

Heaven has heard my prayer—I die for you—I die in your arms."

Again the ebbing blood took from him the power of speech; the wretched Eleanor bedewed his cold cheek with her tears, then started up, and wringing her hands in all the agony of despair, attempted to fly for assistance; her feet refused their office, and she sunk by the side of her lover, with a scream so piercing, it seemed the parting gush of soul and body.

Our party had happily been reinforced by another, and victory declared on our side; the Scots in their turn were now prisoners, and I demanded they would search the forest for my sister ere they proceeded to the castle. The loud scream she had uttered soon conducted us to the place. Ah, Matilda! what were my sensations when I saw the sister I so fondly loved apparently dead, with her arms extended over the pale and bleeding body of lord Percy! In early youth so deeply sink

some

some impressions on the mind, no subsequent time can erase them; thus indelibly imprinted on my memory was the scene which presented itself to my view. It was almost in the centre of the wood, where it had lately been cut down, and a smooth green extended on each side of a small brook, whose clear surface reflected the dancing beams of the moon, which was riding in its fullest splendour; the fall of the water over an interposing rock was the only sound that broke the stillness, and every eye seemed rivetted to the spot where lay the fairest flowers of nature untimely cropped. Percy's horse, regardless of its master, was browsing on the herbage. The Scottish chief had fallen near the edge of the brook, upon which floated his plaid, and his steed hung over him as if bewailing his fate.

By the side of lord Percy and my sister, whose garments were drenched in blood, stood a venerable figure; his long beard and his snowy hair waved with the breeze;

in his hand he held an uplifted crucifix, and appeared to be ardently praying for the souls of the departed; a hollow groan animated my hopes, and springing from my horse, I ran a few paces and fell; my frame was not cast in a mould so delicate as hers who lay extended a little from me, and I had supported myself amidst all the horrors of the night; but nature was at length exhausted, nor do I recollect any thing from that moment, till awaking, as if from sleep, I found myself laid on a bed, and before me the same venerable figure I had seen bent over the loved bodies of Percy and Eleanor, in the same attitude of solemn devotion.

"Oh speak!" I cried, "tell me where I am—where have you laid my sister? where are the sad remains of Harry Percy?"

"She lives."

"I thank thee, merciful father. But Percy——"

"Restrain your ardour," said the venerable priest, leaving me in anxious suspense,

pense, dreadful as anxious, and returned with refreshments which he obliged me to take—" Compose yourself, my child," said the hermit—" try to sleep; both are safe; but till you are composed, you must know no more."

He left me.

" Both are safe," was such a cordial to my wounded heart that I slept in baby security, nor awoke till the sun was declining, and then awoke tranquillized. Beside me sat Jane, who clasped me to her bosom, and after mutual inquiries on each side in regard to our health, I cried—" But tell, oh tell me all!—ah! how can I believe she lives? did I not behold the sweet, the gentle Eleanor stretched on the cold earth, bathed, merciful Heavens! in her own blood? the brave Percy too—he who died to save her? Ah! how fruitless was his valour!"

" Cicely," said Jane, " why these emotions?—both are alive."

I scarce could breathe, whilst she pro-

ceeded to inform me, that lord Percy, afraid we might proceed in our journey, had set out with the first party which came to our rescue, but had missed us in the wood, till the sound of the horns had directed them which path we had taken. Jane had been closely followed; her pursuers came up just as she reached the castle—they rushed in with her—the gates were shut, and the desperate ruffians made prisoners; she, mounting another horse, and armed with the sword of the chief, returned at the head of a resolute band of soldiers, and arrived at the time lord Percy had followed the wretch who was bearing off my sister Eleanor while the Scots were victors. I had not observed Jane, nor had she been near me, till I fell in attempting to go to Eleanor, when, with a presence of mind suitable to the heroism she had displayed, she flew to me, calling to her aid a surgeon she had brought from the castle with her."

"Fear not," said he, "lady Jane, your sister will soon recover—let her be removed

to

to the cottage on the skirts of the forest." He then proceeded to the apparently-dying Percy and Eleanor; her eyes again opened by the assistance so timely afforded, but her senses wandered. At first Percy was thought gone for ever, but some small signs of life encouraged them to have him borne into the hermitage (whose owner it was I had seen at the side of the bodies); Eleanor insisted upon attending her lover; he appeared dying; his wounds, however, being examined, the surgeon declared them not mortal, and that the loss of blood alone had caused so deathlike a swoon.

"Weak as my sister is," continued Jane, "she will not leave a moment the couch of her deliverer."

The Scottish leader was sent to his friends for interment. From the prisoners we learnt this expedition was undertaken to revenge the death of their chief, who had been at the head of a party of pillagers, and returning laden with spoil, were overtaken by the lord warden, who fell in leaping a

ditch in the act of seizing the chief, who thus released, raising his sword, would infallibly have killed my father, had not at that instant the gallant Percy advanced, and drawing his bow, shot the robber to the heart.

The earl was confined by the bruises he had received, and as yet knew not of our dangerous encounter; ignorant that he was a second time preserved by his noble kinsman, for had not his watchful care sent him to meet us, no doubt the villains would have, undiscovered, effected their purpose of firing the castle, and putting all that escaped to the sword. We too should have arrived in time to see this horrid revenge executed; for it appeared they were only lurking in the forest till sleep had lulled the inhabitants of the castle into defenceless security.

I accompanied Jane to the hermitage, whose venerable owner informed us, that lord Percy seemed better than he could have supposed possible after the loss of so much

much blood. The surgeon allowed the distance to be so short to the castle, that his patient might, he thought, be safely conveyed thither in a litter; "more," rejoined he, "is it on lady Eleanor's account necessary than his. To rest here is impossible, and if speedy care is not taken of her, she cannot support the fatigue and anxiety her delicate frame has undergone much longer." This was a truth we were fully convinced of when she made her appearance; good Heavens, how pale and deadly did she look! I threw my arms around her, I wept on her bosom. Eleanor's eyes were dry; in vain were our persuasions, our assurances, that every reasonable hope might be entertained of lord Percy; she seemed fully impressed with the idea he had but to linger a few hours till he left for ever her for whom his life was forfeited. She heard us in silent horror whilst talking of his removal, and returned to his apartment, unconsoled, unconvinced, almost unhoping, and alive to nothing but despair.

Lady Jane and I mounted our horses; we reached the castle quickly; we found my brother Thomas just returned from Narworth, where he had been upon a visit to lord and lady Dacre of Gilsland (you remember lady Dacre was one of the earl's daughters by his first wife). His absence rendered him ignorant even of the lord warden being wounded; to him we related all that had happened. Our arrival being made known, we were summoned to attend the earl, who trembled alternately with rage and terror at the account we gave of our danger and escape; he declared his resolution to attend the removal of our gallant defender; scarce could we prevail upon him to relinquish the idea, which he was, from his weakness, entirely unequal to; besides, already was my brother Thomas gone to the hermitage.

Before it was quite dark, the slow and mournful procession reached the castle; Percy had borne the removal better than we could have hoped; at his earnest re-

quest,

quest, and in obedience to her father's commands, Eleanor retired to take that rest misery had so long deprived her of, and nature wanted so much.

The lord warden, by the advice of the surgeon, desisted from an interview, although highly impatient, till morning. The wounded youth spent the night, attended by my brother, with intervals of ease and sleep; the earl entreated to be indulged with a conference, to offer his esteem, to pay his gratitude.

This request was immediately granted, my father being supported into the apartment of the more than hero, who stretching out his hand, made a vain effort to rise; the earl embraced and called him his guardian angel, begging his forgiveness for having so long delayed interceding for the restitution of his honours and estates. "But," continued he, "it was what I wished the countess to do, certain of her influence over her nephew, who unfortunately still remembers only the rebellion of Hotspur,

and that Percy is attainted for opposition to the house of Lancaster."

Percy's feelings, joined to his weakness, made it necessary this conversation should end; the earl left the apartment. Eleanor soon entered; her features had regained some of their former animation, and she wore a look of expressive hope. Throwing herself by the side of the bed, she burst into tears; they were the first she had shed since the hero she loved had been in danger; relieved by these and rising, she cried—"Be not offended, Percy; these are tears of joy: indeed I do now hope—oh! much for you I hope!"

"Ah! my beloved Eleanor," he replied, with a voice whose plaintiveness betrayed the tenderest emotions, "I have now indeed much to hope, much to desire, much to live for; attending the lord warden, dependent, and scarcely more than a slave, how did I wish some fierce Scot would end a life of which I had long been weary!"

Jane now interfered, and told them

peremptorily

peremptorily either to restrain their emotions, or she would acquaint the earl, who doubtless would change Eleanor for some older and more prudent nurse.

The following day the countess of Westmoreland arrived, for the courier who brought the tidings to Bothal, having proceeded to Newcastle, had acquainted her with our rencounter, and she flew to us on the impatient wings of maternal tenderness.

Embracing us all with an ardour of affection which her high spirit too often concealed, my mother wept over our relation, and shuddered at the dangers to which we had been exposed; without changing her dress, or taking any refreshment after a journey which had been attended with many fatigues, she entered the apartment of the wounded hero; her generous soul longed to repair her neglect, and acknowledge its obligations. In such moments the pride of birth is subdued by sensibility, and each gaudy vanity of life, stripped

of their artificial colouring, fade or assume new forms.

"Can you, lord Percy, forgive my inattention? trust me it was impossible I could be blind to your virtues. How ridiculous was it in me to resent the treason you were innocent of, and to forget that the noble arms of Percy and of Neville seated my brother on the throne! it was ungrateful. Again let the houses be united; refuse me not, reject not the hand I offer you; I have not been blind to your love for Eleanor—her wasted health—did it not speak her secret attachment? Tell me, am I mistaken? do you not indeed love my daughter? or do you, resenting my behaviour, refuse the alliance? No, no, your generous heart disdains resentment; say only you forgive me—the countess of Westmoreland stoops to ask it."

The expressive countenance of Percy had undergone a variety of changes whilst she spoke; he would have answered, but the

the imperfect accents died on his lips; at length he said—"Gracious Heavens! could it be possible that the mother of Eleanor should offend Percy? were it possible, when she condescends to say, 'Forgive!' sure it effaces all remembrance. Ah! could he also forget that still the attainder hangs over his fortunes—forget he exists upon the bounty of the Nevilles, then might he dare to own a lovely maiden of that noble house has long possessed his throbbing, anxious heart. Yes, lady Westmoreland, though as earl of Northumberland I might ask her love, nor dread refusal, yet believe me, the outcast Percy would not, dared not ask it."

The countess arose, and drew from behind the curtain the trembling, blushing Eleanor—"Here," said she, "I have a father's authority to dispose of this hand, which now I do, to the preserver of the earl of Westmoreland—to the gallant defender of this maiden's life and honour—to the noble Percy, the dearest object of her hopes and

fears;

fears; yes, Eleanor, anxious for your happiness, I have watched the rose fade on your cheek and silently proclaim your love; nor passed your sighs, Percy, unheeded. I marked too your wish of solitude and abstracted look. As soon as you can leave your apartment, you may be united in bands which death alone can dissolve: but, Percy, be speedy," said she with a smile, in recovering, "for till your union I will not quit you, not even for the court, not even to entreat my nephew in your favour; nor shall she wed any other than an exile—the exile who saved her life at the hazard of his own; no, Percy, it shall not be to the earl of Northumberland I give my daughter, but to something nobler—a man of courage and honour."

Eleanor, overcome by the tide of joy which burst to her heart, threw herself at the feet of the countess, hiding her face in her robe, and burst into tears; her mother raised and clasped her to her bosom; my sister would have spoke—would have declared

her

her filial duty, her gratitude—would have owned her love; but though her countenance pourtrayed all this most eloquently, her tongue was silent. Percy returned his acknowledgments in a voice which betrayed his extreme agitation; the feelings of his soul mocked all speech, derided all language. The cheeks of the countess were bedewed with tears; at that moment I felt a sensation of pleasure more grateful than language can impart.

Jane had left the room, conscious the heroine here must yield to the woman. The countess drew Eleanor's arm through hers, and leading her out, said—"We exhaust lord Percy—let us go, my child."

I turned to him as they parted; he seemed pale and fainting—"Ah!" shrieked I, "he's dying."

The surgeon who was with him had foreseen this, and brought assistance with him: we retired, but soon learnt that the violence of the agitation Percy felt in this interview had caused the wounds to bleed afresh;

afresh; and had not such aid been given, from the very great loss of blood before, he must have perished—for joy is often a more fatal poniard than grief.

No one was admitted after this to the apartment but the necessary attendants. The earl was soon able to ride, and Eleanor acquired spirits to accompany him; her health and strength were fast renovating; her beauty returned with them, and became more particularly striking; an air of softness and languor hung over her, and added to the interest of her features. No sooner was lord Percy able to quit his chamber, than the lovely Eleanor and he were married, without any of that pomp which, otherwise situated, the earl and countess would have deemed indispensible: immediately after the ceremony, our mother set out for the court, with a strong guard, escorted by my brother Thomas.

Scarce were the countess and her train out of sight, when a messenger arrived from sir Alexander Home, a neighbouring Scottish

Scottish chief, begging permission of the lord warden for himself and a certain number of attendants to hunt on the English ground; and leave was granted in the usual form for three days. The morning fixed for the chase being arrived, a page preceded, who came to entreat the earl, or some of his family, would join in the diversion; this invitation was declined, lest, as it often happened at such meetings, which, though commencing in perfect amity, not unusually ended in bloodshed. Sir Alexander had been well known to Percy at the court of the regent, and he agreed with fame, which spoke loudly of his courage and skill in every martial, every warlike exercise; of a temper open and generous, the delight of his friends, who admired his talents, and would fain forget the ardour of his soul, that often hurried him into adventurous enterprizes, some of which it was feared might prove fatal to a youth so loved, but so impetuous—"Beware," said Percy, "my fair maidens, of this Scot; in vain has

many

many a dame of Scotland sighed, for his heart seems as cold as his person is fascinating."

We longed to see this knight, in whose praise we had heard so much, and with my sisters mounted the battlements of the castle; soon we spied the gallant troop, and fixed our imagination upon him we fancied must be sir Alexander; he separated from the party and made up to the gates, followed only by the page who bore his hunting spear; the earl advanced to meet him; what passed we could not distinguish; but as he turned his horse, he cast his eyes where we stood, and taking off his cap, bowed with an elegance that suffused the face of Jane with alternate red and white; recovering herself, she addressed Eleanor—

"And so this is all we are to see of this Scot, of whom fame has been so lavish. I love a hero; it is strange the lord warden did not invite him into the castle; it was very strange lord Percy did not speak to him; why does not my sex allow me to accompany

company him? at least some of our attendants might—it is discourteous usage surely."

"You are grown suddenly partial to the Scots," replied lady Percy.

"Have you already forgot, Jane, our late adventure?" said I.

"Ungenerous girl," she retorted, "do you compare the gallant Home to the fierce leader of a band of robbers?"

Eleanor, wearied by a subject to her no way interesting, descended into the castle, and we followed her.

The evening of the next day, we were sitting in an apartment of the castle, when a blast from a horn seemed to shake every turret; the earl started up—"Percy," said he, "these are our guests."

"Ah! my dear lord," said Eleanor, "I thought your friends no more, by their mistaken zeal to see you, were to retard your recovery (which of late had been the case, as it was now well known through Northumberland that Percy was with the lord warden, whose gates had been daily besieged

besieged by the friends and vassals of his noble guests)."

Percy arose, and kissed off the tear that trembled upon the cheek of his gentle bride; his looks seemed to thank her for this proof of her love, nor could he force his tongue to chide her fears—" It is, my loved Eleanor, sir Alexander Home; he comes to sleep with his followers here to-night."

A blush overspread the face of Jane; she cast her eyes over her dress, and forgetting the heroine in the woman, seemed to disapprove it; she half arose, then replaced herself, again rose, walked to the door, and again reseated herself, just as the earl entered with four Scotch gentlemen. The figure of sir Alexander was peculiarly noble, and his dress well adapted to shew it to advantage; he seemed to enforce respect; he was considerably above the middle size, looked indeed a chieftain; his countenance and penetrating eyes said, he was born and had been accustomed to command;

mand; such, thought I, was the famed Wallace; his plaid was gracefully thrown across his shoulders, over which fell, in dishevelled ringlets, a profusion of deep auburn hair; at his back hung a quiver, and in one hand he held a bow; his complexion looked embrowned by the sports of the field; but taking off his bonnet, his forehead seemed to shame the snow that had already whitened the top of Cheviot.

"Percy," said he, "will you apologize to your beauteous bride and her lovely sisters for our abrupt appearance? Not bred in courts, we are unskilled in their manners and approved address—pray tell them so. So anxious were we to profit by the lord warden's hospitality, and view beauty so much extolled (yet now we see it, must confess too sparingly), that we forget our hunter's garb and field-accoutrements, unsuitable to the presence of the fair daughters of Raby."

"No apology, sir, can be necessary; or was it, your courtesy has not left any thing

for

for my lord to say," replied the lady Percy.

During the evening sir Alexander rallied Percy, alleging the victory over the robbers was more owing to lady Jane than to him, for she united policy to courage. "It was," said he, "by her orders the horn was sounded, otherwise you would not have known where in the forest the enemy lay; the wound she inflicted on the villain who fled with lady Eleanor made him less able to cope with you: her presence of mind too, which, by deluding a part of the pursuers towards the castle, and having them secured, divided their force; and that alone enabled you, Percy, to keep them at bay; and when she returned, her animating presence (for who is it her presence would not animate?) soon turned the scale of victory."

Sir Alexander did indeed seem animated by the presence of Jane; his ardent looks, his gestures, plainly declared it. Now turning to the earl—"My lord," said he, "lady

"lady Jane ought not thus to engross the beauty of her own sex, and join it to the heroism of ours. Heavens! what are your English youths composed of? how did they suppose she should be seen with impunity? such loveliness, such dignity! It will require all your caution, my lord, to guard this charming maiden from being to England what a less fair dame was once to Greece; either then leave her, my lord, to the care of some knight here, or bring her no more to the borders of Scotland, lest, like another Paris, I may carry off a lovelier Helen."

The entrance of Jane prevented the reply of the earl, who waved a conversation it was very evident he disliked; but sir Alexander remarked it not—his every faculty absorbed in the newly-created delight he felt in the presence of lady Jane.

The following morning, she entered my chamber ere it was light, begging I would accompany her to the battlements of the castle, inquiring if lady Percy was to be there

there—" Sister, sister," I replied, " may not our going displease the earl, who appeared last night dissatisfied with the unguarded expressions sir Alexander made use of as he so eagerly praised you ?"

Jane could not bear control ; she was quitting the apartment, almost in a rage ; but recollecting herself that there would be indeed an impropriety in our appearing without Eleanor, she returned—" Cicely," said the high-spirited girl, " I will not go—allow me to stay with you ; this window gives a view of the gate—mine has none ;" but we scarcely saw them pass the drawbridge, the gloom of the morning hiding them from our sight. The day was fine, and Jane requested me to accompany her in a ride, which, though the road we took was described by the earl, and directly opposite to that the hunters were gone, yet every minute was she hoping to hear the sound of their coursers.

Evening came at length, and brought again to the castle sir Alexander—" This,"

said

said Jane, "is the last time perhaps we shall ever see this charming Scot;" a sigh rose as she spoke, and blushing she continued, "soon, very soon we must return to Raby; Home will never come there; you, Eleanor, may again see him; when Percy, restored to his lands, holds his residence at Warkworth, will he not there ask his friend to visit him?"

Lord Percy entered with sir Alexander, who appeared often lost in thought; often he sighed, often looked at Jane with eager wishes, as her intelligent countenance betrayed the feelings of her heart; agitated by hope and despair alternately, she seemed to forget she was never again to see Home, that he would never visit the towers of Raby; she remembered only that she loved him, and that her heart was framed *not* to despair; again his country was a bar—what though the earl and countess wished for a more splendid marriage with some English baron, to extend their already-powerful alliances! Still she seemed

to hope till reflection overpowered every idea of love or happiness; and "ah! adieu, sir Alexander!" seemed to die on her lips, as we took leave for the night.

The sound of the horn warned us to take our stations to see the hunters depart, and Jane had prevailed with lady Percy to mount with us the battlements. Here the eyes of the knight soon discovered us; he bowed, then drew somewhat from his bosom, which, after pressing to his lips with a gallant air, he replaced from whence he took it: lady Percy saw not this, as she was leaning over the battlement, her eyes fixed upon her lord, who stood at the outer gate. The agitated countenance of Jane plainly revealed to me this action referred alone to her—" Do you not know," whispered I to Jane, " what it was the gallant Scot drew from his bosom?"

" Hush!" she replied, " do not mention to Eleanor what you saw, and I will confess to you."

Following to her apartment, she gave me

me an epistle to peruse from him, in which he informed her, that, struck by the heroism she had displayed on that dreadful night we were attacked, when we came to the castle (which, it appears, had furnished matter of conversation on each side of the borders ever since), he had made many unsuccessful attempts to see her, and at length requested permission of the lord warden to hunt on the English borders, in hopes the object of his wishes might be at least drawn forth to behold a chase which he made as splendid as possible. The lord warden's hospitality had favoured his designs, and given him an opportunity to behold his charming daughter, the mere fame of whose beauty had made an impression on his heart, which, at the moment he beheld her, became for ever indelible. He begged permission to cast himself at her feet, and declare a passion no power could control.

Jane now said, she supposed what I had seen sir Alexander press to his lips so

ardently, was the billet she had found means to convey to him, in which she had given him no cause to despair, could the earl's consent be obtained; but this there was too much reason to doubt. She now condescended to ask my opinion, what could cause the coldness of our father's manner to a guest who surely deserved all his attention, and with whom at first he seemed so delighted? "Ah!" I replied, "my dear sister, in my father's opinion, he bestowed encomiums too warm on your heroism and your beauty."

She regretted having made herself so much the subject of conversation—"Too true, Cicely, it would have better suited a son of the Nevilles than a daughter, to be armed with a sword, to inflict wounds, to act as a leader to the soldiers of the lord warden. Yet why should I regret, if it saved so many lives, my thus outstepping the limits prescribed our sex? sir Alexander does not despise me for it; no, this noble, this generous youth was attached by

by it; what need then has the object of his choice to regard the idle remarks of the cowardly and timid? what can my father object to Home? is he not noble? has he not an estate equal to his brilliant expenditure? are not his manners dignified? does he not look able to protect, to defend? what an air of courage, of generosity, sits on his manly brow! Yet, ah Cicely! what love, what sweetness, beam from his eyes! The earl of Westmoreland is too liberal to think that merit can alone exist in England; tell me then, my sister, what could cause a change so violent and so perceptible?"

"Alas, Jane! may not the earl have other views for you? our princely mother may aspire for you (sanctioned by the marriages of her other children) to the hand of a Plantagenet; a Scottish knight in her ambitious mind will degrade her daughter; acquaint, my dear sister, lady Percy; she may inform you, she may di-

 rect

rect your conduct; what can I know of the world, child as I am?"

"Tell me not, Cicely, of lady Percy; she will too severely condemn the slightest murmurs against a parent's will; you must be my confidant and my guide:" she enjoined me secrecy, and I instinctively obeyed.

The time approached when we were to leave the borders; to look forward to this seemed to give joy to all but Jane; to me it was evident (though no more her confidant, for in her own bosom lodged all her feelings) that she dreaded the period which was to take her from her beloved Home, with whom I was certain she kept up her connexion, though unable to guess by what means she saw him. I found she dreaded what already I knew regarding her lover, and resolved to trust me no farther, finding in herself resources which precluded the necessity. I could not wonder at this sudden, yet mutual attachment; they seemed indeed formed for each other;

both

both high-spirited, I attributed it alone to a fear of meeting a refusal from the earl, that sir Alexander had so long deferred asking his consent; ill I knew would either brook a refusal, and I lived in continual dread of the event.

The meetings on the borders between the English and Scottish wardens were over; all the differences had been amicably adjusted; Percy's strength seemed equal to the undertaking, and the following week, after the conferences were over, was fixed for our journey. A courier arrived from lady Westmoreland, bringing the pleasing news of her safe arrival at court; as yet she had not had an interview with the king, but had received so kind, so gracious a message from him, that she did not doubt of her request being granted.

This was indeed joy to the gentle heart of Eleanor, who, though she could have been happy in a cottage with her beloved Harry Percy, yet to see him restored to his honours and land, by the intercession of

of her mother, was matter of triumph as well as comfort.

We were sitting the next day at dinner, when my father was informed sir Alexander Home stood at the gate; a kind of consciousness of herself played over the face of Jane, and the blush told me she dreaded somewhat as he entered; we quitted the room soon after dinner, and saw no more of Home, till he hastily bowed as he passed in full gallop, where we were walking without the walls of the castle. Jane's fine features were highly agitated— "Sir Alexander," said lady Percy, "might have had courtesy sufficient to have said adieu to us; for we shall now indeed, Jane, see no more of him, I suppose."

The eyes of my sister followed her lover; and as she lost sight of him amidst the windings of the hills, in spite of her caution, a sigh found its way from her breast. She turned to Eleanor—"Very true, he might as—but perhaps—'tis too late—it is all over." Those strange, disjointed sentences

tences could not have escaped the observation of her to whom they were addressed, had she not at the moment been attending to a message from the earl, which commanded our presence in the castle.

We were acquainted by the lord warden, that in two days we were to leave the borders—"Why so soon?" exclaimed lady Percy.

Jane stood at a side-window with her back to us, by which her emotions were concealed, and she had time to collect herself, whilst the earl replied, by informing us that sir Alexander had been to request his permission to address lady Jane; "already have I engaged my honour she should marry sir John Howard; and though Home is brave, noble, and generous, yet his country is a material objection, though I had not pledged my word to Howard; of course, I have forbidden his suit, yet dreading the impetuous temper of this Scottish chief, I remove sooner than I thought of; arrived at Raby,

 Howard

Howard shall receive the hand of Jane, he then may guard her."

I expected my sister would have urged her right to dispose of her hand where already her affections were engaged, but she maintained silence. Ah, my charming, my noble-spirited girl! why did you not suffer the natural frankness of your temper to have its scope? Alas! how many, what a long, long train of evils, which hung impending, might have been averted!—I was convinced this seeming calmness was in consequence of some plan laid between them; my father's refusal she had expected, and I doubted not of their measures being taken accordingly; yet I hoped our removal so much earlier might disconcert the plans they had formed. I found myself bound by the rash promise I had made not to disclose what I already knew, and resolved to watch in secret her motions, or, if I could find an opportunity to give her my advice, urge her to inform the earl of her love for Home; I followed

to

to her chamber as soon as I could, she retiring early on pretence of sickness; but the door was fastened, and her damsel told me that her lady was asleep.

Overcome by the extreme anxiety I sustained, rest fled me; and when at last I slept, it was prolonged to a late hour; I arose hastily—again I visited my sister's apartment—it was without an inhabitant. Ah! thought I, she is gone indeed! With hasty steps I traversed each part of the castle, still I saw not Jane; to lady Percy I went, determined to reveal all I knew; but there I found her lord, who rallied me upon my apparent agitation, and turning to the window, I saw Jane alight. Good Heavens! what I felt! Without staying to give any reason, I flew into the court—I threw my arms round her—I could have wept; nay, I did weep silently, though deeply.

"What means all this?" exclaimed Jane.

"Why, why need you ask? guess my

 fears,

fears, when I found your apartment empty, by my joy at seeing you return."

"Go, you little simpleton! what do you fear?" Embracing me, she bade me remember my promise, and dread nothing for her. In vain, during the day, did I endeavour to obtain any private conversation with my sister; and when she kissed me and said adieu, ere she retired to her apartment, a tear dropped on my bosom; still more alarmed, I would have followed her, but the earl detained me with lord and lady Percy, giving us charges of care, and directions in regard to our journey, he proposing to set out the next morning by break of day with Jane; our retinue were too numerous to stop at one place on the road, and the earl had determined I should follow with Eleanor and her lord the day after. At length I was dismissed, but Jane, I was told, had been long in bed and asleep; I threw myself on a couch, and, in spite of any resolution to the contrary,

trary, slept. I had determined to see Jane ere she set out, but awaked not till the sound of the horses' feet in the court told me they were departing; I started, and flying to the window, through the grey dawn, could yet distinguish the graceful form of Jane, just issuing out of the gate; vexed at my thus being prevented from conversing with her, I dressed myself; in vain did I try to rouse me, in vain were lord and lady Percy's attempts to amuse; I felt a dejection of spirits, for which my fears could but too well account. Eleanor was hurt at my agitation; I was upon the point of telling her all I knew in regard to Jane, but recollection told me, I had repeatedly promised never to reveal it; I dreaded lest Home had by some means heard of our sudden departure, and might endeavour to carry off my sister; I shuddered at each footstep. Eleanor constantly inquired what I meant by looking out at every noise; my excuse was, that I dreaded

dreaded the safety of my father and Jane; nor had she yet forgot the night we came to the borders, so as not to fear for them. I traversed each apartment of the castle, repeatedly visiting that of Jane; I looked round it, as if its silent walls were to inform me of her loss or her safety—but all appeared desolate and forsaken.

So eager were my wishes to follow them, that I was equipped in the morning ere Percy and my sister had risen.

Percy, still weak, bore the fatigue better than we could have hoped, and against dinner the second day we reached Newcastle, where the earl had halted; he embraced us as we entered, expressing himself doubly happy to see us, as he feared Jane might have detained us by her illness. Alas! what I dreaded by anticipation appeared now to be realized—"My lord," said I, gasping through want of articulation, "Jane came not with us."

"Why leave her?" said my father.

"She

"She went, we all supposed, my lord, with you," replied lady Percy, for I no longer had the power of utterance.

The earl was all rage, he suspected she had eloped with Home, and vowed vengeance against them both—swore he would return to the borders—he would raise all his friends, all his vassals—he would extirpate the very name of the chief who had dared such an insult. When the passion of the moment had subsided, he informed us, that the morning of his departure from the borders, ere he arose, an attendant of Jane's came to desire he would visit her lady, "who was," she said, "violently ill;" "and indeed so she appeared," continued the earl; "she begged I might on no account postpone my journey, but hoped she might be able to proceed slowly the next day with lord and lady Percy." Inquiring for the surgeon, my father was told he had gone to the hermitage in the forest, whose sage inhabitant was in possession

session of a speedy cure for that disorder of which Jane complained; that lady Percy and I, fatigued by our attendance, had retired to bed, and were asleep. Deceived by so plausible a story, the earl left her, after repeating his charges to her attendants; as he was mounting, lord Percy came to him, apologizing for his appearance so late; my deceived father replied, " the occasion was sufficient excuse" (supposing his rest had also been disturbed by Jane), and begged he would not allow Eleanor to fatigue herself, yet hoped, notwithstanding the girl's illness, she might be able to proceed the next day—a favourite damsel of lady Percy's was really ill at this time, so the deception became complete.

Lord Percy recollected he was just entering the inner court as he met Jane, who started when she saw him: already was she mounted, attended by her damsel and a page—" Why," said Percy, " so late,

late, my sister? the earl has already left us, and I expected you to have proceeded with him."

Jane, without hesitation, answered—"Some material papers obliged her to turn back, but that ere the earl reached the edge of the forest, she should overtake him."

"Stay but a moment!" cried lord Percy, "I will be your escort."

"Alarm not yourself," gaily said Jane, "have not I ere this been your general? Only let me entreat you not to frighten my sisters by telling them of my being so slightly attended: adieu, see the morning star sinks apace!"

She now gallopped off, and Percy, fearful of alarming us, never mentioned the circumstance. Whilst we were deliberating what course to pursue, a messenger arrived from court, with a promise of full pardon, and restitution of honours and lands to Percy, as soon as an exchange in regard to the son of the regent could be effected;

effected; but his attendance upon the king in person was thought absolutely necessary by lady Westmoreland; and the earl was by Henry ordered immediately to assist him with his counsels on affairs of great import: this was additional distress; to whom could her father delegate his authority? who recover his lost child? In vain did Eleanor and I entreat the earl that he would not oppose her inclinations, in case she really had eloped with sir Alexander.

Percy in vain would have dissuaded him—"Shall we plunge again the borders, so late all peace, in bloodshed? repay violence with violence? yield, my lord, to the wishes of the brave chieftain and your lovely daughter; in the hands of the regent the sword of justice is weak and powerless; he dare not, were you to apply, oppose Home, whose friends and connexions will die to defend him."

The earl, all passion still, dispatched a courier for Brancepeth, to sir John Howard.

ard, who immediately set off for Newcastle. His indignation knew no bounds; thus to have his promised bride snatched from him roused his pride perhaps more than his love; he solemnly vowed revenge, and in his unbridled fury even hinted that the earl had connived at her escape; he admired lady Jane Neville, it is true, but he looked up to the strength, to the consequence of her alliance. The earl now saw the full extent of the storm he had raised by sending to him, and it grew beyond his power to allay it. Howard's fury actually melted my father into compassion for his daughter, and they parted mutually dissatisfied with each other; the next morning we learned he had engaged, as soon as he left Westmoreland-House, a band of resolute fellows, accompanied by whom he set out for the North. Horror sat on all our looks at this news. Percy now declared he would immediately head the troop which had been our guard from the borders, and, if possible,

ble, reach the castle of Home before the revengeful Howard. His recent wounds rendered this a dangerous undertaking; the earl insisted upon his staying with us, and set out himself to retrace, with hasty steps, the road he had so lately passed.

In a kind of mournful expectation, hope almost suspended, we spent a week, during which no tidings of either party reached us; but on the evening of the eighth day, we were summoned to meet my father at a small village, seventeen miles north of Newcastle. Thither then we went, and found stretched on a miserable bed, in a miserable room, the so late beauteous daughter of the earl of Westmoreland, in the wildness of delirium; she knew no one, except at intervals her father, whom she would vehemently implore to pardon her; incoherently raved of her lover—of sir John Howard—"Ah, save! at least save him!—do not tell my mother!—I will not see her—did you not say it was the countess of Westmoreland?" said she, and

she

she hid her face in the bed-clothes; then starting up, "Hold me not! is not that sir Alexander, whose bleeding wounds call aloud for vengeance? see how the flames burst all around us!—Why was I saved? I will return—I will rush amidst them, a willing victim, and die with my lover!"

Certain, by these incoherent speeches, some mighty mischief had happened, we wanted resolution to ask the earl, nor did he seem possessed of fortitude sufficient to inform us; he was almost as distracted as she, whose life hung quivering on a point.

Truly dreadful was the scene, Matilda; in the very spring of life, in the full bloom of youth, grace, and beauty, possessed too of a mind which promised every exertion —oh! to behold this lovely creature, born of a family so noble, dying in the sordid bed of a peasant, her face distorted, her eyes wild, and every sound she uttered wringing the hearts of those around her!

A fresh summons arrived now to hasten the departure of my father and lord Percy;

Percy; that day the doctors had declared her fever at the crisis, and that the night would determine her fate; what an anxious period for Eleanor! so much depended upon her lord's presence at court, and my father's attendance was so essential! yet how could a parent leave a child so situated?

Jane now fell into an apparently-sound sleep, and, with much entreaty, lord and lady Percy were prevailed upon to take some rest, whilst the earl and I watched the bedside of the helpless victim of disease and misery in silent expectation. Acquiring resolution to relate the disaster, he dismissed the attendants, and beckoning me to the corner of the room, informed me, that without stopping to rest, or even for refreshment, he traversed Northumberland—"And ere," said the earl, "I reached the banks of the Tweed, all was darkness; the river swelled with rain, it was with infinite hazard that I crossed it and entered Scotland. In vain my attendants

tendants remonstrated—alas! I was too certain of the impending mischief to regard the dangers to which I was myself exposed. How oft did I wish that I had more narrowly inquired into the state of my child's affection ere I had refused the gallant Scot, and resolved, even though she had so flown in the face of her duty, to bestow her hand where she had given her heart! I dreaded to reach her too late. Ah! why, why did she act so unlike herself? why not nobly avow her preference? Occupied by such reflections, I was roused by a sudden gleam of light which overspread a sky thick and hazy; a sad presentiment of evil seized me. Lost amidst the windings of the hills, we no longer beheld the flame; but journeying on, found ourselves, of a sudden, enveloped in smoke, and at once a bright flame burst upon the sight; at this moment we saw the castle of Home one blaze of light; struck with horror, and spurring my steed, I gallopped on furiously at the head of my little troop,

till

till we came near enough to distinguish a female figure standing upon the battlements, above whose head the flames mounted in columns—'Good God!' I cried, 'preserve my child!' and drawing closer, discovered it was not Jane, but a venerable matron, who, in all the agonies of despair, rent her grey locks, and giving a loud shriek, as the beams gave way, fell amidst the ruins. Turning to another part of the battlements, by the reflection of the blaze, we beheld, stretched on the ground, a female, who appeared newly fallen from the north turret; if she yet lived, every moment was of consequence; I felt all the activity of youth, and leaping a deep fosse, raised from the ground—gracious Heaven! the lifeless form of your sister Jane! Her face streaming with blood, her garments blackened and rent, I bore her in my arms to the first gate, which my attendants broke down; scarce were we through it, when the tower fell to crackling ruins, and a dreadful mass covered *the very spot*

from

from which I had so lately snatched my miserable child. Ah Cicely! nature shrunk within me at the sight, every feeling of gratitude was awakened towards that merciful Power which had sent me, almost miraculously, to her aid.

"My endeavours to recover her so far succeeded as to know she once more breathed; at length, opening her eyes, she gazed wildly round—'Ah!' she cried, 'my dear Home, are you safe indeed?' then turning to the fiery ruins, she groaned, and sunk again upon my shoulder, lifeless and unconscious of her misery.

"Sir Thomas Norton, who had gone to reconnoitre the adjacent wood, now returned with a domestic of sir Alexander, who informed me, that in the close of the evening, a horn had sounded at the gate, which proved a messenger from sir John Howard, bringing a defiance and challenge to the owner of the mansion; at the earnest request of lady Jane, he refused to meet him till morning; but very soon

the English beset the castle; and sir Alexander, sallying out unexpectedly upon them, put his besiegers to flight, and followed fast upon them, leaving but a few aged domestics to guard the walls; he could give no further intelligence, for having received a wound, he dropped behind, and being bewildered in the wood, was found by sir Thomas, and could only conjecture that the English had fired the castle.

"Day now faintly opposed its glimmering to the blaze of Home Castle; Jane was much recovered, but, in violent pain of body and mind, she fell at my feet—'Oh my father!' she cried, 'if it is in your power, pity, if you cannot forgive, the wicked author of such accumulated mischief!—ah! speak, my father, speak to the wretch who kneels to you! tell me, is it only a horrid dream? tell me, oh! tell me, where is my love? is he alive? oh my father! where, where is his venerable mother? only say she lives, only say,

she

she escaped the flames.' In vain did I try to sooth, to comfort her; exhausted by her sufferings, she now seemed almost motionless, and lost in despair and horror; lifting her upon horseback, before one of my domestics, we slowly took the road to the English borders, and in our route discovered the numerous dependants of the Homes assembling; already had they lighted up the usual signals of an invasion.

" After a few paces more, on the opposite side of the river, we saw two parties engaged in battle, and hastened across; but when the horse on which Jane was seated had reached the middle of the stream (which here ran with rapidity), it slipped and she fell; in vain appeared all our efforts to recover her, when quickly started from the combat the gallant Home; he heard it was lady Jane Neville, and careless of his life, leaped into the stream, and safely bore her to the Scottish side of the Tweed; attentive to the preservation

of my child, I had not observed sir John Howard had also crossed the river; and whilst, wet and exhausted, Home was carrying his lifeless burden up the bank, had attacked him with fury; Home was stunned by the blow, but recovering and feeling fresh spirit, as if by inspiration at the sight of my daughter, at one stroke stretched the proud sir John Howard senseless at his feet.

"Jane yet was insensible of all that passed; by her lay the dying Howard, and leaning upon the hilt of his sword, sir Alexander, the blood flowing from his wound, and his pale countenance convulsed with pain.

"The combatants on each side separated; the few who remained assisted in taking their lord and lady Jane to a cottage which stood near the fatal banks.

"Awakened to a full sense of all her misery, Jane, regardless of herself, watched over her beloved Home while hope glimmered a single ray—that ray was al-

ways

ways faint, and at length vanished at once, leaving the prospect in dreary unillumined darkness, for the midnight hour terminated the existence of this noble and generous chieftain."

Here the earl sighed most bitterly, arose, walked hastily across the apartment, and throwing himself down by the bedside, clapped his hand to his forehead in an agony which half-awaked Jane, while he ejaculated—"Ah! and thou, my child, art the next victim!"

In a broken voice that pierced my very soul, scarcely articulate, she sighed out—"Nay, stay, my lover, my husband! why should you go? it is Howard—I knew him well, bloody and revengeful!—ah my head! Home, hold it to your bosom—but you are wet—why did you plunge in? why did you save me?"

Her voice sunk by degrees, and I could distinguish no more.

The earl replaced himself by me, and after he had somewhat calmed his agitation, in-

formed me that Jane was at that time so insensible of her sufferings, that he did not even guess at the violence of her fever, but had by easy stages conveyed his unconscious daughter till they reached this village, where the excess of delirium and weakness obliged them to stop.

Jane slept till almost noon, and when she awoke, the physician we had brought from Newcastle gave us room to hope for her recovery; now we urged the departure of lord and lady Percy, who accordingly left us on the following day for court; and in a week's time my sister was able to travel by slow degrees to Newcastle: it was reluctantly the earl set out to follow them.

The countess still knew not what had happened in her absence; it was judged necessary for the interest of Percy she should still be near the king. In a few weeks my sister Ann (who had attended my mother to London) returned with her and my brother Thomas to Newcastle.

The

The earl and lord Percy being left at court, we learned he was to have all his honours restored by the next parliament. Jane, although recovered from indisposition of body, laboured under a fixed dejection of spirits, from which she never appeared likely to be free. I spent my whole time in her apartment, except when forced out by my mother for air; wholly inattentive to every thing around her, she would sit for days without speaking, the mute image of fixed despair; when I was absent, she appeared restless and uneasy, and on my return would rise, throw her arms around me, and, in soul-rending accents, exclaim—"Ah Cicely! I thought even you had deserted me! Oh! had I, my sister, listened to you, still would he have lived!—wretch that I am! he died to save me! why did not the flames devour me with lady Home? why, my beloved, didst thou snatch me from the waters of Tweed? hide me, Cicely, from myself!—do I live, whilst he lays cold, cold in the earth?

earth? yes, my sister, that noble heart which beat for me—for me, my sister, is now cold and senseless." And after exhausting herself, she would sink again into absent melancholy. Ann declined attending upon her sister, and the presence of the countess evidently distressed her; I alone therefore sat with her the mournful day, and my sleep was interrupted by the sad sighs of the night. Thus passed a painful interval of time.

What was my joy, Matilda, when again I was clasped to the gentle heart of lady Percy! who accompanied her lord to Newcastle, where we still remained on account of a noted physician who resided there. He judged it improper the poor sufferer should see either Eleanor or her lord; but lady Percy's heart longed to sympathize in the dear girl's afflictions, and she would not be refused admittance to her apartment; on her entrance Jane screamed, and starting from her seat—"Eleanor," she cried, "come you to reproach

proach me? nay, do not, my sister!—forgive! for I am still your sister (and she would have knelt to her), the murderer of your Percy's friend!—ah! let him curse me, but do you, my gentle girl, pardon and pity me!"

Eleanor threw her arms round the lovely mourner, and bedewed her sorrows with tears of compassion and love—"No, my dear sister, deem it not possible, the generous soul of Harry Percy can never think hardly of you; trust me, Jane, your misfortunes, and those of the gallant Home, have often wrung from his heart the sigh of pity—that is his deepest curse."

"Will he then, forlorn and wretched as I am, visit me? can he bear my sight?" she cried, with more animation than I had long heard her express.

"Assuredly, my beloved girl, if you wish it, he will gladly see you," replied lady Percy, "and pour the balm of affection on your wounded spirit."

The presence of the friend of her lover

 had

had an effect upon Jane we in vain had wished for; a thousand recollections seemed to rush on her mind at once; a plentiful shower of tears relieved her bursting heart, and gave us hopes they might produce the best effect.

"Oh! what misery has my duplicity caused!" exclaimed the weeping maiden; "oh Percy! had I suffered the gallant Home to entrust you with our mutual love, you would generously have sued to the earl—you would have told him your friend was worthy the first of English dames—that his daughter did not dishonour the noble race from which she sprung, when she acknowledged the passion she felt; it was his wish, Percy; my father too would have listened to you. Let me hold my senses, Heaven!—he is no more—his mother—his domains—does not his whole family curse me? and am not I accursed? Oh Percy! do you not also curse me? yes, you do—wretch that I am! for me he died, the noblest youth, the

warmest

warmest friend, the kindest——He loved you, Harry Percy, with all the enthusiasm a generous soul could feel; oft did he talk of you, oft rejoice that an alliance with the maid he loved but tied him closer to his friend: what long, long days of happiness did he not teach me to look forward to! all hope of happiness is set now in eternal night; happiness died with him—it sits now in the silent tomb, where rests my lover, and there I long to meet them both.

"Is not my crime a crying one, the sin of disobedience? yet is it not severely punished? no, no, does justice still sleep? am I not a murderer—is not the arm of God and man upraised against me? why am I suffered still to live, to pollute with my presence—a murderer's presence, the calm of innocence, and the enjoyments of spotless purity!"

She had been allowed to utter her heart-moving complaints till we feared, from silent melancholy, she might relapse again into

into delirium; Percy tried to sooth her woes, his voice seemed to possess a power over her beyond any thing else; and he left her in the evening in a calmer state than she had been since the fatal firing of the castle: that night too she slept.

The next morning, Percy and Eleanor again visited Jane ere they set out for Warkworth; the duke of Bedford, on whom it had been bestowed, had, in compliment to the countess of Westmoreland, given it up for the residence of lord Percy, as legal restitution could not be made of his attainted lands, till the terms were settled for an exchange between him and Murdoch earl of Fife.

Ann accompanied them, and Jane now attempted to join in familiar conversation; though still sunk and dejected, yet she appeared to have so far conquered her feelings, as to throw off that deep gloom which bordered so near to insanity.

The earl of Westmoreland arrived soon after Ann had left Newcastle; he was impatient

patient to clasp this dear sufferer to his heart, and the first interview between them was truly affecting; the earl in some degree condemning himself for the melancholy effects that succeeded the ill-fated sir Alexander's attachment.

We were soon able to journey towards Raby, where we had not been long till my father was summoned to attend the parliament at Westminster; with him went the countess and my sister Ann, whose marriage with Humphrey Stafford, the son of the earl of Stafford, by Ann Plantagenet, daughter of Thomas duke of Gloucester, was shortly to take place: this powerful alliance was highly agreeable to both families, and already seemed adding to the conscious importance of our sister Ann.

• Percy was now obliged to appear at court, after which he was to return to Scotland; Eleanor, in his absence, yielding to our importunities, took up her residence at Raby. How changed was the appearance

appearance of this charming place from the last time we were here, when the earl presided, and hospitality and splendour went hand in hand! the apartments crowded with noble guests, the courts with numerous domestics and happy retainers of the family, each sun rose to awake us to fresh diversions; now silence reigned through the whole castle, the walls no longer echoed to the minstrel's song and the shouts of joy; but all was dull and lifeless.

Jane, whose brilliant wit had illuminated every subject, was possessed with a melancholy which seemed fixed for ever; the charming Eleanor, parted from her lord, on whom she doted, was serious, though not gloomy; what then had I to rouse me from appearances so torpid, but the consciousness that I had an important duty to discharge, in attending and consoling those beloved sisters, the delight and comfort of my life?

At this time the king had declared his intention

intention to claim the crown of France; all the nobility and yeomanry were in commotion, raising their vassals and the men at arms it was equally their duty and pride to furnish. Jane had already professed her firm resolution to take the veil, and had preferred her request to the earl; reluctantly did he promise she should be suffered to commence her noviciate after the ensuing summer.

Our relaxations were little varied; we sometimes rode in the park, when the early state of the spring would admit. Jane, whose strength of mind and body seemed to be returning (although her vivacity, once the life of each circle, was fled for ever), appeared now capable of exerting herself merely so far as she deemed it her indispensible duty; her mind was possessed of powers much above what fall to the common share of our sex; its elasticity was shortly to be proved.

Her love appeared interwoven with her existence, so unalterably were her affec-

tions

tions fixed upon sir Alexander; consistent was it to the character of this charming girl, that her whole soul was engrossed by grief, whilst, with a constancy and fortitude worthy of her, she resolved to bear her sorrows through life, shewing herself unchanged, and that her heart was a living monument, in which was enshrined the adored image of her lover.

We were sitting one day under the shade of an ancient oak (a spot consecrated to affection, for here we had first seen Percy) when a courier arrived, by whom we learned Ann was married; that the following week the countess would set out upon her return to Raby, the earl accompanying her, from whence he was to proceed to the borders, as the Scottish marches were committed to his charge, lords Manly and Dacres, the husbands of my sisters Maud and Philippa, being appointed his assistants; he was also constituted one of the lords of the council. Our joy at this intelligence was damped by the

idea

idea of the danger which would attend so many of our friends in the proposed expedition to France; our conversation had naturally turned on the marriage of our sister Ann—" How different, my dear Eleanor, was your union!" cried I unthinkingly; " Ann regards but the splendour of her choice—there she is gratified; you gave your hand to him you would have chosen, had you been the child of some lowly peasant, and he the herdsman of some neighbouring flock."

Lady Percy, by her looks, made me sensible of my error; I directed my attention to Jane, whose expressive countenance seemed almost convulsed—" Cicely," she said, " let me warn you to guard well that sensible, that susceptible heart; how severely, oh God! thou knowest have I paid for giving way to emotions too lively to be controlled by reason!—ah! had I, like Eleanor, waited a parent's blessing, I should not now mourn, as I mourn, a misery so deserved!—an outcast of society I ought

ought to be; for am I not the murderer of a whole family? Often, my sisters, do my dreams present lady Home amidst the flames of her castle; now view I lady Douglas calling aloud for vengeance; she waves a blazing torch, a bloody flag, and rouses her countrymen to the destruction of the Nevilles.

"In vain I bid them glut their wrath upon me; they tell me, horrid was the ruin, great must be the sacrifice—a whole race fell—a whole race must expiate their fall. Where—oh! where shall I find rest?—will peace dwell, my sisters, within the hallowed walls of Barking? there shall I devote all the ornaments of happier days, for this widowed garb shall wrap me till the holy habit confirms me penitent; no earthly lover can succeed to him whose bones may moulder in dust, but whose exalted spirit, well pleased, looks down from heaven to guard the very thought, the very action, of his devoted bride; yes, my sisters, his dear idea animates me to a fortitude

fortitude worthy of him; nor would I thus fly from the trials of a busy world, nor seek a shelter from its evils in a convent, were it not my father would press me to make a choice amongst those nobles who have long solicited his alliance. Alas! dare I again withstand my parent—again oppose my wishes to his will? forbid it, blessed Mary! and you, good St. Cuthbert! strengthen my resolutions, and receive me as your adopted daughter!"

Jane appeared exhausted, while Eleanor and I wept; fearful and trembling, I could scarce urge their return to the castle.

As we rose, Jane continued—"Long, my dear sisters, have I wished to acquaint you with the progress of my love for Home; but I felt not sufficient strength of mind; to-morrow, perhaps to-morrow, you shall hear all."

"Let then, my dear Jane," said lady Percy, "the recital be made at this seat; here I fancy my lord is always with me—here

here I feel a degree of fortitude, as if really blessed with his presence."

The following day saw us seated under Eleanor's oak, and Jane began her story—" Prepossessed, by the fame of his noble exploits, in favour of sir Alexander Home, ere I saw him, you will not then wonder at the love which I felt for the gallant Scot: his air, his manner, were those of a hero; he seemed to command my admiration; but when I found he was attached to me, that I had inspired him with equal sentiments, what were my feelings then! I frankly avowed my love, forgetting that love wanted a parent's sanction; severely I feel the curse upon disobedient children.

" I will no longer distress you by my sad reflections, but proceed with my story. —You recollect, Cicely, the billet the ill-fated sir Alexander drew from his bosom the morning we saw him and his party quit the castle; this billet he found means to answer, through the assistance of my attendant

attendant Isabel; in it he purposed quitting his party as soon as he had crossed the borders, and returning to the hermitage in the forest, whose inhabitant having formerly received many obligations from the family of Home, he had yielded so far to his interest as to allow him to use his cell, and, by wearing his garb, pass to the edge of the forest unsuspected; I had allowed him room to hope he might stay there, in watchful expectation of sometimes beholding me; he concluded by entreating I would vouchsafe him an interview the following morning, appointing the place.

"Ah! too easily did I agree to his request. Before the gates of the castle were opened the next day, accompanied by Isabel, I sallied out at a private postern, of which she found means to procure the key, and also a contrivance to pass the moat which surrounded the castle; we soon met Home, who again entreated my permission to ask the earl's consent to his love.

"The

"The fears of being closely watched, the certain expectation, now that my father had given his honour to sir John Howard, of my marrying him (for well I knew how dear the lord warden held his honour), all urged me to refuse him.

"I had seen Howard at Raby—even then I took a dislike to him; even then did I see through the thin plausibility of his manners, his revengeful and vindictive temper—that his boasted courage was the effect of a furious spirit, utterly devoid of that generosity which warmed the breast of the gallant Home—which prompted Harry Percy to conceal his love—which drew him forth to defend us—which saved the life of our father at the hazard of his own; my soul disdained the offer of such a heart; I had treated him almost with contempt when he solicited my hand, convinced it was not Jane, but the daughter of the earl of Westmoreland he sought, and the advantage of a connexion so widely and so powerfully allied. It was not

Jane

Jane Neville he loved; the same to Howard would it have been, had I been equally deformed in mind and body. Ah! to have set in opposition to him the noble, the generous, the high-spirited Home, could I but love him—could I but detest Howard? In the moments of reason subdued, when love triumphed over duty, a plan was laid for our future meetings.

"At length the day of our departure was fixed; I sent a hasty billet to Home, and that day, in disguise, he entered the castle, when all was absent but myself. In all the frenzy of despair, throwing himself at my feet, he urged me to fly—he would beg his mother to protect me—she would not refuse—she never did refuse him any thing; when he found I would not grant this request, he swore no power on earth should divide us—he would seek sir John Howard—he would make him sensible of his rights, the prior rights of love to avarice and ambition.

'My sword,' exclaimed Home, 'my trusty

trusty sword, shall end the contest—who is he that shall pretend to lady Jane Neville?'

"Now he determined to throw off his disguise, and avow himself openly to my father. 'Surely, Home,' I cried, 'you are frantic.'

'Have I not reason?—go; you love, you prefer this Howard—but know, perfidious girl, he shall not escape my vengeance; this instant I set out for my castle, from there shall I seek this minion—how have you deceived me! how quickly broke your vows!'

"Ere I had time to reply, he flew out of the apartment, and mounting a horse which stood ready accoutred at the gate, waiting for my page, disguised as he was, took the road which led across the borders. Dreading the consequences which might ensue, I wrote a hasty billet to the impetuous chief, assuring him, if he asked the consent of my father, and was refused, I would elope with him, provided lady

Home

Home would assure me of her protection, and he promised to treat me as a sister, till my father's consent could be procured, as I was resolved never to marry without it: my faithful page set out secretly with this, and reached the castle just as sir Alexander was mounting to seek revenge. Need I repeat that Home solicited, and the lord warden refused him.

"Yet believe me, my sisters, I blame not my father; I knew his integrity, and was conscious his promise to sir John Howard must be kept sacred, whatever opposition a weak, helpless daughter might urge; nor did it surprise me to learn our departure was fixed to take place within two days.

'You,' said my father, 'are the destined bride of sir John Howard; my word is past—it is irrevocable; the gallant manners of the Scottish chief have not, I hope, influenced your affections; as the wife of Howard, you must think no more of him.'

'I do,' said I, with an air of triumph,

 'promise

'promise to think no more of sir Alexander when I am Howard's bride;' and quitted my father to answer a letter from my lover.

'I have this moment, my dear Home,' said I, left the earl; 'I have promised him—yes, Home, I have promised to think no more of you—but not till I am the bride of Howard; then I solemnly promise to think no more of him for whom alone I live. Home, ere thou shalt see thy Jane wedded to any but thyself, thou shalt see her pale corpse stretched at the feet of her father, herself suddenly ending a life she could no longer sustain. Yes, my beloved, into thy hands am I going to resign myself, my fair fame, the unsullied reputation of the daughters of Neville. To thee, the high-spirited descendant of kings and heroes, Westmoreland's daughter yields—nay, she implores thy protection; be constant—be faithful. Trust me, no doubts filled my bosom of thy honour, when I prevaricatingly smiled at the lord

warden's

warden's precaution. We are to set out for Newcastle in two days—my plans are laid—I dread not this early departure—I long for it—come to-morrow evening to the castle, nor quit its vicinity till accompanied by thy Jane Neville.'

"I saw, my dear Cicely, your uneasiness, I saw you suspected me, though you scarce knew what to suspect; I could not bear your interrogations; you remember the pains I took to avoid you. Nor need I repeat to you my deceiving my father by a pretended sickness.

"Meeting with lord Percy wonderfully disconcerted me, but love is quick in its suggestions, and I eluded him; setting out full gallop, attended by my page and Isabel (both of whom were in the secret), under pretence of following the earl, we joined sir Alexander at the verge of the forest, and immediately took the contrary road to that my father was gone, the sound of whose horses' feet still struck upon my ear."

The day gloomed, the wind whistled cold through the almost-leafless trees; my sister seemed exhausted, and though longing to hear the sequel, I proposed our returning to the castle and having some refreshment.

Slowly were we winding through a little copse when a stranger hastily crossed the path—"Either," said Jane, turning and looking after him, "I am deceived, or I have somewhere seen that face."

She trembled as she spoke; the blood had forsaken her cheeks.

"My fears," said she, "magnify every thing; they were not once the inhabitants of this breast, but the guilty heart ever dreads its punishment. Ah! too sure am I, some evil hangs impending over the towers of Raby; grant—oh! grant, I alone may suffer!"

In vain did we endeavour to dissuade Jane there was nothing to alarm her in the appearance of the person we had seen, but, from this mere suggestion, gave orders

for

for a double guard to the castle through the night.

Eleanor begged she would not proceed with her relation, when we were again seated in one of the now-solitary halls; but Jane said—" Trust to my firmness; although I look with horror on the sad, the fatal effects of my love, yet in tracing those sad scenes I feel a fortitude which seems to whisper, I shall meet my lover, a happy spirit, where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage.—We soon," continued my sister, " arrived at Home Castle — ah! my revered, my amiable lady Home, can I, while I breathe, forget the reception you gave me! I felt abashed at the dignity of her appearance, which reminded me I had a mother, yet tempered with such a sweetness of countenance, that whilst it enforced respect, yet also commanded my love; but you, my sisters, have seen her son; alone was he worthy such a mother; she received from him all the respect, all the attention such a parent merited.

merited. She seemed to pity me for the rash step I had taken, yet by her attentions seemed to say, had she been sir Alexander, she would so have persuaded. I was encouraged by her kindness—'she would herself,' she said, 'have followed the earl, to endeavour to reconcile him, but then I should be left unsanctioned by her presence; yet ere long she would visit him, but thought the first effusions of his anger had best be over; and the courier was dispatched only on the very day the earl returned again to the borders.

"The news of my being at Home Castle reached her only other child, who was married into the powerful family of Douglas. How different from her mother! fiery and vindictive, proud of her family and high connexions, she burned with fury to hear her brother had at his castle an Englishwoman—the very name she hated; that he was resolved to marry her, yet sued and waited a permission for it.

"Sir

"Sir Alexander had recently gone out, when his fierce sister entered the castle; her behaviour was rude to brutality, her language equally as unbecoming to her mother as herself, whom she censured for receiving me. On Home's return she haughtily assured him, did he marry me, an Englishwoman, he might seek the protection of that nation he chose to seek a wife from—'Is there,' she cried, disdainfully, 'no fair heiress whose blood has flowed through noble veins for ages in Scotland, that should have yielded to thy suit, but thou must go to the sworn enemies of thy country for a wife? a fairer maiden would have crowned thy bed—richer dames still sigh for thee, thou disgrace to thy race, disgrace to thy nation! no longer shall it look on thee as a Scot—thou hast sullied the name.' She advanced to me panic-struck, and ere I could recall my spirits, shook me furiously—'Yes, thou minion! I will rouse a storm on the borders that shall rend thee to atoms.'

"Home, in agony of passion, dragged her from me.

'And think you,' she cried, 'I will not separate you—that I have it not in my power to do so?' then falling on her knees, swore solemnly to be revenged for the insult put upon herself; for I now found she had proposed a match, rich and noble, which, after seeing me, he had refused.

"I trembled—yes, even I trembled, as I still do, at the malice of the Douglasses—would I was this moment in a cloister, or rather with my loved Home! for there alone can I be safe from her vindictive fury: yet may she aim perhaps her vengeance not alone at me; this is why I involuntarily dread the sight of every stranger."

"Are we not, my dear Jane, here secure from her malice? think what a distance it is to the borders; are we not surrounded by my father's vassals?"

"Alas, my sweet girl!" she replied,

"you

"you are ignorant of lady Douglas's temper; you forget the power, the number of the family she is allied to, of that she is descended from. Oh! she will rouse them all to revenge her upon the Nevilles —for *myself*, I smile at all her power, but you, my sisters, should her fury light upon you, I could not support it."

"Ah! would to God," whispered the gentle Eleanor, "my Percy were now with us! we need not then to fear a thousand Douglasses."

"Resume, my dear Jane, your story; the night wears away fast."

"I was," said the fair sufferer, "speaking of lady Douglas visiting Home Castle, which she left still denouncing vengeance.

"Sitting one evening with lady Home and sir Alexander, anxiously waiting the event of her letter, a horn sounded at the gate, so loud, I started, and throwing my arms round lady Home—'Ah!' said I, 'my father! shield me, hide me! I cannot

face him! it is indeed the earl of Westmoreland.'

'Do not agitate yourself, my child; the earl will not force you hence.'

'Oh! yes, he will; he comes to give me to that detested Howard.'

"A single moment convinced me it was not my father, but Howard—the detested Howard himself; for his esquire entered, and brought a challenge, in the most abusive style, from Howard to sir Alexander, threatening immediate destruction did he not yield me up, and insisting on his coming out of the gates, that the quarrel might be instantly decided.

'Where,' cried sir Alexander, 'could sir John Howard meet with a man to carry a message so much beneath a knight to give, or a gentleman to carry?'

'Villain! take this answer,' said the bearer of the audacious message, and would have run his dagger through the generous and unguarded hero, had I not wrenched aside the weapon.

"Sir

" Sir Alexander then called his domestics, who broke the wretch's sword over his head, hacked off his spurs, as the greatest disgrace a warrior could suffer, and binding his arms behind his back, turned him out of the castle. So unworthy a messenger deserved no other answer. Again the horn sounded, and Howard himself now breathed defiance.

" I threw myself at the feet of sir Alexander, wept, conjured him by his love for me to refuse meeting Howard till morning, as it was already twilight; at length he yielded, and gave the answer I wished: the castle was now beset with a numerous banditti; they made a feint of retreating, and my lover, with the best part of my defenders, ardently pursued till we lost sight of both parties; but another troop advanced, who seemed resolved to force the principal gate; this we defended for some time, when a cry of victory alarmed us, and shortly after we found the castle in flames, nor was there the slightest pro-

 bability

bability of our escaping, but by delivering ourselves up to the banditti, who loudly urged us to do so, without which all must perish. Lady Home, my faithful Isabel, and I, dreading this cruel death less than the insults of those barbarians, boldly refused them; as yet the fire had not reached the highest tower, which by a secret staircase we ascended, and the domestics opening the gates, the wretches rushed in. Enraged at not finding me, they ravaged wherever the fire had not reached, as well for plunder as in hopes of finding her their leader sought; but our retreat was inaccessible, and the violence of the flames obliged them to return. No sooner were these wretches gone, than we began to descend our winding staircase, in hopes to reach a window we might venture to leap from. I went first, Isabel followed, lady Home was last; just as I reached the bottom of the stairs they fell in; Isabel dropped with them amidst the flames; lady Home was still safe above—'Go,' she cried,

cried, 'my dear child, throw yourself from a window in the room which adjoins my chamber; it is the only one, which is not in flames, that will open wide enough to allow you; I will return to the top of the tower; Providence yet may interpose in my favour; here I cannot support the heat!—haste, oh! haste to save your life! if you survive, tell my son, my last breath shall expire in invoking blessings on you both—adieu, for ever!"

Jane was overcome by the recollection of this sad parting; she stopped—then rising, walked across the room, and striving to suppress her feelings, proceeded by informing us, she staid where she was, till almost suffocated; then seeking the window described by lady Home, threw herself down—"There," said she, "I lay motionless till I was again clasped to the breast of my father.

"You know the sad catastrophe; do I yet live to say, the revered parent of sir Alexander perished amidst the flames? So did

did my faithful Isabel; my page too, Anthony, whose foster-sister I was, he fell in the conflict;—yet," said she, sighing, " sir Alexander Home still survived, and died to save his mother's murderer—ah! what can efface the crime of filial disobedience!"

After Jane had finished her melancholy recital, and appeared a little more composed, we retired to rest.

In the morning she again expressed her fears at the appearance of the stranger; nor could she rest satisfied, till, accompanied by the knight left by the earl as our guardian and keeper of the castle, she searched every apartment, every place of shelter in the park; nothing was found, nothing seen, on which she could form any conjecture regarding what she dreaded; and a few days after, the weather being uncommonly fine, it was proposed we should ride out—" But not," said Jane, " without a guard; nay, do not laugh at my precaution; a secret horror hangs over me still."

In

In compliance with her wishes, we were attended by a number of armed domestics. Eleanor finding herself much indisposed, when we were only a little distance from the castle, returned; Jane and I would also, but she insisted upon our proceeding, as we proposed visiting the mother of Jane's faithful page, who perished in the fatal conflict; as nurse she had another claim, and neither were unregarded by the noble-minded girl. The cottage of Alice stood near the extremity of the park; ere we reached it, we must pass the shattered remains of an old castle, once the residence of a Saxon chief, but nearly demolished when William the Norman laid waste the see of St. Cuthbert; the towers, overgrown with ivy, seemed tottering to their bases, affording shelter to owls and ravens, and all kind of voracious birds; the wary shepherd drove his flock from the threatening ruin, and the walls would have been pulled down ere this, had they not been spared at the request of

the

the earl's first lady, who admired their romantic appearance; still therefore the earl preserved them—sad was the preservation to his children; for we had not passed it many minutes when a band of Scotchmen (for such their dress proclaimed they were) rushed out.

"Alas!" exclaimed Jane, "good St. Cuthbert, assist me! Guard," she cried to our attendants, "my sister!"

We were far from assistance; to escape was impossible, as, did we offer to return to Raby, we must meet the ruffians. I was put in the centre, where I conjured my sister to stay—"Fear not," she said, "for me;" and making one of the pages dismount, threw off her sable dress, and exchanging it with him, again mounted, armed with a spear. The Scots now reached us, headed by the very man whose appearance had alarmed Jane so much; he commanded that the ladies should be delivered up, and threatened death to him who should oppose; then making an effort

to

to seize Thomalin (the page who wore Jane's dress), a scuffle ensued, in which my sister gave orders with the utmost prudence; twice did the undaunted heroine encounter the chief, twice was he unhorsed, and rising from his second fall, he let his weighty axe fall on his adversary's head—"Learn," said he, "thou saucy page! to pay a better deference to superiors."

Jane, stunned with the blow, fell; the best of our party were wounded, and the remainder fled; Thomalin and myself seemed rivetted to the spot where Jane lay motionless. The chief of the ruffians tied our arms behind us, and leading our horses, retired to the old castle, out of which they had issued.

Entering one of the towers, a trap-door was opened, and we all descended; how was I surprised at finding myself in a large apartment, out of which opened several passages! a secret, I believe, then entirely unknown to every person at Raby.

"Here,"

"Here," said the chief of the band, "you are safe; it is really a pity to part you, although (nodding to *Thomalin*) it was but you we had a commission to seize; we have waited long here, yet, in despite of your precautions, we escaped your search."

I at length ventured to ask them to allow me a few minutes' private conversation with my sister; this was granted. I begged of Thomalin to hide his face as much as possible; his dress indeed concealed it almost, and it was agreed he should persevere in silence, lest his voice might discover him.

"Ah lady Cicely!" cried the page, "do not I owe my life, my more than life, to the earl? how gladly, Heaven knows, would I resign it to serve you!"

I felt reassured by those expressions of attachment, and after settling plans for our conduct, began to examine the room we were in, and found the small portion of light we had, came in by chinks equal

with

with the ground. It grew darker, and we heard the villains consult about firing Raby; we also learned from conversation, that the ruins had been searched, and that a party still guarded them, whose destruction the villains vowed. When night had involved all in darkness, we heard the trap-door open, and some of the ruffians depart; one soon returned with the news of the party being secured who watched them.

What were my feelings, think you, my dear Matilda! shut up in this dungeon with a set of abandoned wretches, at whose entire mercy I lay! I imagined I saw the castle of my fathers in a blaze, my beloved sister Percy involved in its ruin; whilst, extended a pale corpse beneath the waving boughs, lay the noble Jane. These dreadful images chased each other through my brain in silent agony till near daybreak, when one of the villains returned, who bade the party immediately abandon their retreat, and in hurried accents informed

formed his confederates, that no sooner did they attempt passing the ditch, than they were surrounded, and all made prisoners but himself.

A faint gleam of hope darted through me; sure Jane lives, thought I; she, and she alone, must have planned this successful sally. We were now compelled to set out, as they were satisfied their retreat would be known from those who were taken prisoners. Our road was taken through unfrequented paths, in a contrary direction to that it might be supposed we should go: after making a considerable circuit, we entered the forest of Marwood; ah! what grief smote me, as I viewed the stately castle of Barnard! could its noble owner have known a daughter of the house of Neville was so near, so distressed, how gladly would he have rushed to save her!

At the time we entered Marwood, a troop of horse was seen at a short distance; to avoid whose pursuit, we took our way

through the thickest part of the wood, where the prickly brakes perplexed our steps, and rendered walking almost impossible. Sick with fear, overcome with fatigue, my clothes rent by the bushes, catching at an opening of the wood a view of the castle of the Fitzhughs, I threw myself on the ground, and refused to move: whilst they were busied about me, Thomalin was making his escape, which I had begged him to endeavour, but he was soon brought back. It was now time to inform them of the change of dress which had deceived their hopes; irritated at the deception, they swore revenge on the page, and deliberating on the means of dispatching him, they regarded me not; when rising hastily, and running with all my speed to the edge of a steep rock—"Stand off, barbarians," I exclaimed, "or this moment you lose your prey!—swear solemnly to commit no violence upon the page, and I will accompany you; but refusing, I throw myself headlong down this

this precipice; approach not a single step, or even his life shall not restrain me."

They saw I was resolute, my looks were desperation, and I stood prepared to execute my purpose, with but one foot resting on the ground.

"Ah! not for me," said the faithful page, "shalt thou suffer! I will plunge myself, a willing victim to your revenge, amidst the waters of the Tees, spare but this noble lady."

He was commanded to be silent, and the ruffians consulted together a short space, knelt down, and solemnly swore, if I surrendered myself, they would offer him no harm.

Matilda!—had I then ended my days, what a train of evils, during a long life, would have been avoided! had I indeed been conscious of these evils, what could have withheld me from plunging into eternity! Merciful, my beloved friend, is Providence, in unfolding our fate by slow degrees, or sure this withered heart must

long,

long, long since, have sunk beneath this pressure of misfortune; then undepressed by woe, it almost yielded to joy, when I found my request granted. Brought up with me from my infancy, I had looked on this youth as a brother—the favourite of my brother Thomas, whose page he was, he had joined in all my childish schemes of happiness, and a sharer now in my distress—to lose him was worse than death.

Finding I could no longer walk, the wretches cut branches from the trees, of which they made a kind of seat, and relieving each other by turns, bore me along, bewildered amidst the intricacies of the forest. We now, I found, approached near the edge of the wood, and lifting up my eyes, I saw, rising through the trees, gilded by the last rays of the sun, a building, which I knew to be the ancient priory of Eaglestone; a smile animated my dejected features; Thomalin perceiving it, by signs bid me repress my feeling, nor let

my

my agitation discover my hopes; but soon were they blasted, for the foremost Scot now espied that we drew near the habitation of man, and uttering a horrid oath, announced to his companions what he saw, who returning into the forest, resolved to stay there for the night.

Thomalin begged a hut might be raised to shelter me from the cold; but alleging it might discover their route, they refused it.

"Spare your entreaties, Thomalin! you speak to savages—a little longer, and I shall cease to be."

I felt sinking under distress of mind and fatigue of body, when one of the party advanced, and said he had discovered an old hut, which appeared to have been erected by some woodmen; to this place was I conveyed; a piece of oat-cake was my only refreshment, and one of the Scots gave his plaid to wrap me in; a bed was made for me of withered leaves, and Thomalin assuring me he would be my guard, begged

begged I would compose myself and try to sleep—"through my body alone shall these wretches approach you."

I felt somewhat reassured, and betook me to my miserable couch; Thomalin threw himself before the entrance, and beyond him lay the Scots on the ground. Even my distracted thoughts were not sufficiently powerful to keep me awake; I slept, if that can be called sleep, while a thousand dismal images flit through the brain.

Long ere daybreak I was awakened, and mounted on horseback; a party of those marauders had been detached to scout the forest during the night, and meeting with some defenceless cottages, had entered, carrying off whatever provisions they could find; then binding the wretches they had plundered, left them to their fate; from them they had learned where a number of horses grazed belonging to lord Fitzhugh, and crossing the Tees, brought them to our station. Somewhat refreshed

by the sleep I had, I bore the fatigue a little better, and we gallopped at a furious pace along the banks of the Tees, into whose waters I would gladly have precipitated myself, to avoid the fate I expected would await me.

We entered the wild and extensive forest of Teesdale, just as the first streaks of light shone in the east, but had not advanced far, when it was proposed to dismount, and a plentiful breakfast of the coarse fare taken from the peasants was spread on the grass; this over, they proceeded to choose a leader, in the room of him taken prisoner at Raby; and I had the satisfaction to learn, he was chosen to whom I had been indebted for the little comfort of the preceding night; he indeed had procured me all the indulgence I received, which, small as it was, yet in my situation seemed a blessing; to this high honour was he raised for his dexterity in discovering the beautiful horses of lord Fitzhugh.

Again

Again we mounted, but had not proceeded far, when, imagining they heard the sound of voices, we struck into the higher parts of the forest; but finding it impossible to proceed in this direction, it was resolved we should stay where we were till towards evening, when they were to endeavour regaining the road we had left; our progress was thus very slow; the thick wood was tangled by bushes, and the deep morasses oft threatened the whole party with destruction.

The night before had been gloomy and dark, but this evening the moon rising clear and unclouded, it was proposed we should travel all night, to make up for the slowness of our preceding journey.

The noise of a distant fall of water reached our ears, and the beams of the moon playing on the spray formed an iris of ever-varying shades.

When we came near the cataract, Thomalin whispered—"Refuse to go further." I was, ere he spoke, about to

object proceeding; but attending to the advice given, I now supported myself as well as I was able, till we were upon the edge of the precipice at whose foot the foaming waters poured rapidly along; appalled with terror at the horrid din, and already overpowered by fatigue, I sunk from my horse; Thomalin leaped from his, and caught me ere I fell; the chief of the Scots assisted in placing me on the ground, and pouring some kind of cordial down my throat, somewhat revived my sinking frame. Thomalin, with eager earnestness, requested their proceeding no further that night.

"I shall soon faint, indeed, were my accents; I shall soon disappoint the cruel lady Douglas, for she I know it is who thus tears me from my house; here shall I die;" and I threw my despairing head on the cold ground. The generous page promised to stay with the banditti till they received a large ransom, which I would send them, would they release me. Allured

Allured by this, they seemed ready to consent, when two of the most savage started up, and grasping their swords, swore a horrid oath, " they would kill me ere I escaped;" then turning to their confederates—"Did you not, with us, swear to revenge the death of our brave captain, slain by Percy? did you not solemnly vow to revenge lady Douglas on the Nevilles?" This appeal had the intended effect; the larger half of them seizing their swords, surrounded and threatened me with instant death.

Behold me, my dear Matilda, on my knees, surrounded by those fierce assassins, each one with his sword pointed at my breast; I still tremble whilst I recall this scene. How little did it avail me, that the blood of the Plantagenets flowed in my veins! that the great earl of Westmoreland was my father! or that, my danger known, a thousand vassals of the house of Neville would rise to rescue me! but lost in an immense forest, my life was

in the hands of a few lawless barbarians; with not an ability of rescue beyond what nature would have given the meanest peasant—ah! that here had ended a life prolonged to extreme old age, marked indeed by splendour of station, but deeper marked by private misery.

Although I thought, till it was really so near me, death itself would be preferable to my sufferings, yet now it appeared too terrible for my nature not to shrink at; I leant my head on the shoulder of Thomalin, whose voice, pleading my cause, could not be heard amidst the threats of the savages.

Those who at first seemed inclined to favour me now bid the others remember what might be the consequence of my destruction, and that, encumbered with me, they could hardly expect to reach Scotland; but releasing me, the ransom would make their fortunes; that it was Percy who killed their leader, and on him with honour they might wreak their vengeance,

not

not on a defenceless female. The swords of those who threatened me were now turned against their companions; one party fled before the other, and the page and I were left alone.

"Exert now," he cried, "lady Cicely, all your strength; let us fly ere these wretches return."

"Whither," said I, "shall we go?—alas! I am unable even to move."

"Yet," returned he, "oh! yet endeavour."

With his assistance I rose, and leaning upon his arm, drew close to the brink of the river.—"Whither do you lead me?"

"Trust me, gentle lady—oh! trust in my guidance; at the edge of this cataract dwells a holy hermit; could we reach his abode, sequestered as it is, you would be safe, whilst I return to raise the vassals of your house."

"Ah, my good friend! conduct me thither; I will be guided by your counsel." My knees shook under me, and scarce could

could Thomalin support my tottering steps, as we took our way down a slippery winding path which led to the bottom of the immense rock over which poured the whole force of the river. Here let me pause while I recall the impression of the moment, standing at the side of the deep gulph which received the waters as they fell from the rock—the noise mocked even the thunder: close to it we could distinguish no other sound, as it furiously poured down its craggy sides.

I cast my eyes up, and saw the water descend in one continued sheet perpendicularly down many feet; the beams of the moon pierced through the aged trees which overhung the stupendous rocks, and dancing on the spray, threw a silver shade over all. I followed my conductor down the side of the stream, which hurried along with rapidity, after passing from rock to rock.

" At a little distance from the deafening of the torrent, near this, should be the

hoary

hoary hermit's cell," said Thomalin; and as we cast our eyes upon the Tees, saw the reflected glimmering of a taper, with the rough and woody banks from whence it proceeded.

"Bear up, my lady!—lo! yonder," pointing to the place, "is the dwelling of the holy Ambrose."

Wet and weary, I begged he would proceed, and leave me to my fate; he entreated, he wept, he consoled me—"If," said he, "you persist, I perish—stay here to die, and I will die with you."

Again I exerted all my strength, and creeping on my hands and knees, at last gained the cell; and opening the latch, saw kneeling, at his midnight orisons, the hermit.

"Receive, oh! receive," said Thomalin, "venerable father, two wretched wanderers, who implore your protection!"

"Enter, my children! misery is ever welcome here," replied he rising; and as he bent his looks upon me, I felt a kind

of reverential awe; his snow-white beard hung down to his girdle, which fastened a coarse robe of cloth around him; his eyes beamed a kind of celestial radiance, and his countenance seemed to denote him scarcely allied to mortality, as, with looks of benignity, he raised and supported me to his little fire; wet and almost benumbed with cold, its little blaze appeared a glimpse of heaven itself.

Thomalin earnestly begged him to block up the small window, or rather chink, through which the friendly taper guided our weary step.

"What brings you," cried the hermit, "hither at this lonely hour, midst hills, and woods, and rocks, where all is wild and terrible? who is this lady? sure my eyes deceive me, or I behold a daughter of the earl of Westmoreland, for so her features bespeak her, and her mien declares her noble."

In few words I made him comprehend lady Douglas's malice, and the full terrors of

of our situation. The board was then spread with such provisions as his cell afforded; he then produced a flask of wine— "This," said he, "I taste not, but it will revive your drooping spirits—God's mercy! this present from the hospitable house of Raby may now preserve one of its children!"

"Ah! yes," exclaimed Thomalin, "my father, this is the second time you have succoured the children of the earl; twice have you rescued me: recollect you not, holy Ambrose, the page who was with lord Thomas Neville, when, separated from all his companions, and lost in the wood, as we were with the earl chasing the deer, here should we have perished for hunger, had not your charity relieved us?"

"I thought," said the hermit, "I recollected that face, but it is now six summers ago; you are grown much since then; besides, this change of dress alters you; still your face wears the same expression which

recalled so many sad ideas to my mind. But I will not obtrude any self-fraught conversation; a little quiet will be necessary for lady Cicely—how dreadfully did she spend last night! my poor bed will be gossamer down, compared to the rough couch of misery, encompassed with the thorns of danger, for here her sleep is safe: you, Thomalin, may stretch your weary limbs by those embers, while I watch and pray."

In early youth, what an elasticity of spirits do we possess! for I awoke, refreshed by a comfortable sleep, and made as hearty a breakfast on the simple fare of the hermit as in the splendid halls of Raby.

It was resolved we should spend that day in the hermitage, as we supposed the Scots would not quit the forest whilst any hopes remained of finding us. The mind of the good Ambrose seemed to have been polished by a long residence in the world, and my curiosity was raised to know why

he

he had chosen the life of a recluse.—"Father," said I, "this frightful solitude agrees but little with your courtly manners."

"You wonder, no doubt, my child," smiling through a tear, as the sun glistens through a spring-cloud, "you wonder, no doubt, at my choice; yet, perhaps, long ere you reach my age—yet Heaven forefend it!—you may sigh to exchange the splendour of your station for this peaceful solitude; and then, Cicely, you will think of father Ambrose with envy."

Ah! how true did he prophesy! how gladly would my ears have shut out the cries of bustle, the groans of the contending followers of the red and white rose, to have listened peacefully to the dashing of the Tees over the mighty rock that opposed its course; and sickened with the intrigues, crimes, and debaucheries of a court, willingly have resigned wealth, titles, and distinction, for the calm comforts of the lonely cell!

THE HERMIT'S TALE.

"Can I," said the hermit, "refuse to gratify you? soon will you cease to wonder that I thus seclude myself from a world so attractive to the young, to the happy—long has it lost all charms for me. My story will be new to you; the earl your father knows it well, each circumstance and turn of a once-gay and bustling life—a life now drawing to its close. Though now forgotten by all who once knew me, when young in arms, I accompanied your valiant grandfather, John of Gaunt, into Castile; we fought together through all his battles; I was the partner too of his gayer hours—his companion when he espoused the fair Constantia, daughter of Pedro, king of Castile. Amongst the lovely Castilians who composed her court, was donna Theresa, sole heiress to the vast possessions of her father, the

the count D'Aranjeus; long I endeavoured to smother a passion too ardent for concealment, and sought to still the beating of my heart amidst the din of war. Our bosoms felt a mutual flame; in vain the haughty count forbade our loves; in vain he fixed her in a monastery—what place is inaccessible to love? I bore her off in disguise, and under feigned names we traversed Portugal; there we were married, and she accompanied me to England;—but she bore with her a curse—a parent's curse, which sunk deep in her gentle spirit, and just existing to give a daughter birth, expired, leaving me in a state beyond distraction, for it was feeling agony. Her dear remains were interred with my ancestors, the Fitzhughs, at Romaldkirk. Torn from her tomb by force, I refused all sustenance, and resolved, in death, again to greet her kindred spirit; your father (then lord Neville) heard of my situation, and flew to me with all the ardour of friendship; he put my infant Theresa into

my

my arms, and bade me live for *her;* her lifted eye seemed to implore my protection—her features were those of her lamented mother; and overcome by the sight of this helpless pledge of my lost Theresa's affection, I submitted to the guidance of lord Neville, who insisted upon my accompanying him to Brancepeth; with us went my child and her nurse; lady Neville engaged to be a mother to my orphan; nor whilst she lived, did she ever lose sight of a promise, not more solemnly made than piously kept.

"I lived but for this darling, who, as she grew up, promised to repay me all my care: scarce did I suffer her out of my sight, unless when she was in the charge of lady Neville; and had she lived, I should not now mourn as I mourn; my daughter would have imparted to her, whom she looked on as a mother, what was so fatally concealed from me. Tall and elegantly formed, my Theresa had the large dark eyes of her mother; never did

I view

I view such, unless——Oh Thomalin! yours, as they turn on me, inspire sensations of affection, violent but unaccountable—your age too!"

The hermit sighed, and raising his eyes to heaven, ejaculated a prayer. I wondered not at the father; for although I kept my looks for ever bent upon the page, yet found, whenever he timidly raised those large dark eyes to mine, I also felt a sensation I could not account for; he had changed his dress for a hunting suit, which had been left at the hermitage when my brother Thomas was lost in the forest; a profusion of dark hair fell in ringlets down his green vest, as he lifted his hat, whose snowy plumes could not rival the whiteness of his forehead. After a short pause, throwing himself at the hermit's feet, he exclaimed—"Ah, my father! let me share your scanty fare! I will be unto you a son, I will support your feeble step, you shall be to me a father—alas! I know not my own: when lady Cicely

Cicely is restored to the hospitable walls of my benefactor, I feel I must enter there no more; then shall you hide me from the world, from her, and from myself."

I felt a blush crimson my face whilst the hermit bid the youth arise, which he did with his eyes fixed on the ground. I would have spoke—I would have declared my gratitude—I would have said—"The earl cannot forget you saved his daughter; nor is privacy and indigence a reward for fortitude and valour."

But I felt incapable of articulation till I burst into tears—"Ah, no! no! you must not, shall not leave me," was all my overcharged heart could utter.

At this moment the woods, the rocks, the dales, echoed with the voices of our pursuers; trembling I threw my arms around father Ambrose—"Fear not!" he cried; "we mock discovery here."

They drew nearer, I clung to the hermit—now they were close to the cell, I shrunk with agony—they passed it, and their

their voices died on the breeze. It was some time ere we were sufficiently tranquillized for the hermit to resume his story. —" I was," said he, " describing my daughter, a theme I could dwell upon for ever; but you have seen her, for, as Thomalin looked in the dress of lady Jane, just so looked my Theresa, except the fire, the animation of his countenance, which in hers was an expression of dignified reserve and an air of melancholy; the first of which she inherited—it distinguishes the Castilian nobility; and the latter was contracted by the loss of her beloved, her more than parental instructor.

" She possessed every accomplishment which can embellish beauty. I had employed many a happy hour in teaching her those sciences which females are seldom allowed to imbibe, through false ideas and impulsive habit; she proved the sex capable of towering—you'll think me partial, too partial. I indeed adored her; she was adored by all who knew her. Various

rious and frequent were the solicitations I had to refuse for her hand, for I had promised she should marry the youngest son of my brother, lord Henry Fitzhugh, that the estates might remain still in the family. My nephew had been absent in Bretagne five years, whither he went to visit a relation, who intended he should be his heir: she was a child when they parted, but, continually told of her cousin's existence, she early learned to look up to him as her future husband; he was shortly expected to return, and a dispensation having been procured from the pope, they were to be united immediately on his arrival. I was walking one day with Theresa, when a gentleman accosting me in broken English, inquired if he was not near the seat of sir William Fitzhugh; I told him I was the owner of the castle which he saw on the hill, and that I was sir William; alighting, he gave his horse to his page— 'Then,' said he, 'this lovely maid is your daughter—ah! would to God,' exclaimed he,

he, in Spanish, 'the count D'Aranjeus had lived to see this opening blossom! such looked her mother when last I saw her.'

"Theresa trembled and turned pale; I had a peculiar pleasure in instructing her in the Castilian language, which she perfectly understood.

'What,' said I, 'of the count D'Aranjeus?'

'Mine,' said he, 'is a long detail.'

'Let me entreat you will accompany us to my castle; you appear fatigued and to want refreshment.' Bowing, he assented to the proposal.

"His strength and spirits recruited, he informed me, that about twelve months ago, an English pilgrim arrived at Toledo, who being introduced to the count, had informed him of the death of his daughter, and that she had left a child, solely employed in whose education, her father lived in retirement, mourning the death of a wife his affection never could forget—'The count,' continued the noble Spaniard,

niard, 'moved at the recital, sent for me, and opened his intentions of bestowing his vast possessions on his grandchild, and leaving me her guardian: he was not content with this, but determined to see the image of his still-loved daughter, and begged I would accompany him to England; he felt a kind of pride in surprising you by his appearance and forgiveness; in vain I dissuaded. We set out on our journey, but ere we got on shipboard, overcome by travelling and the heat of the weather, he was seized with a dangerous illness, which terminated his existence in a few days: with his last breath he conjured me to proceed hither, to bring his blessing, to entreat you would immediately go over into Spain, do homage to the king of Castile, and, in trust for your daughter, become invested with his estates.'

'Wretch that I am! was it decreed,' I cried, 'that both father and child should fall a sacrifice to my ungoverned love!'

"Ever violent in my passions, I resigned

myself

myself to my emotions, and it was long ere I could command my ideas, or think of the necessary preparations for my voyage. Theresa begged she might accompany us; but fearful her health might suffer from such dangers and fatigues, I would not allow her: impatiently I wished for my nephew's return; I wished to have my daughter married ere I left England; it was the safest and best protection; but delayed by contrary winds, he remained on the shores of France. The ship was ready to sail, in which I was to embark; it was necessary to go; I bade my child, my beloved Theresa, adieu! and solemnly committing her to the charge of my brother, set out, accompanied by don Juan. We had a prosperous voyage, and landed safely at Seville.

"I went immediately to court, and found don Henry on the throne of Castile, who had espoused, during his minority, Katherine, the lovely daughter of the duke of Lancaster, by Constantia of Castile.

My

My Theresa had been the bosom-friend of the duchess her mother; oft had she attempted to reconcile the old count to the choice his daughter had made, but all in vain: chance effecting what she failed to accomplish, prepossessed by her mother in my favour, Katherine presented me to the Castilian monarch; I was graciously welcomed, and after doing homage in my Theresa's name, received investiture of all the estates of the count D'Aranjeus. The king told me, had I brought my daughter, she should, had she married a Castilian, have had also the titles of the family. I ventured to inform don Henry my child was already contracted, or I should have endeavoured to avail myself of his generosity: he then condescended to hint, that if they settled in Castile, the children of Theresa, born in his dominions, should inherit, although both parents were English.

"A favourite with these sovereigns, the courtiers began to envy my influence; a thousand

thousand malicious tales were circulated to injure me with the king, yet ineffectually, further than I found Theresa must herself come to Spain, or finally resign the vast possessions she was heir to.

"But once had I received any intelligence from home since I left it, and then Theresa had pressed my early return; she informed me of the death of my brother, lord Henry, and that her cousin rather insulted than protected her. How impatiently did I find one month roll on after another, yet still my affairs detained me; various were the pretences don Henry found; at length he offered me the highest post his government afforded, would I make his court my residence; I might send for Theresa; the husband I had destined for her might be her guard.

"Almost two years thus slid away, during which I had caused a stately monument to be erected to the memory of my lamented wife and her noble parent, and added largely to their charitable bene-

 factions,

factions. At length was I suffered to depart; with many heartfelt expressions of gratitude, I took leave of the king and queen. My generous friend, don Juan, accompanied me till I embarked, when I tore myself from his arms, unable to pronounce the parting farewell.

"After a long voyage we entered the mouth of the Tees; without staying to refresh myself, or make the slightest inquiries, I rode straight to Cutherstone; striking on the helmet, I demanded entrance; a porter stood at the gate, whose face I knew not—'Where,' said I hastily, 'is your mistress?'

'I understand not,' he returned, 'who you mean; but if it is the lord of Cutherstone you want, he is gone this morning from home.'

'Who,' I exclaimed indignantly, 'do you call the lord of Cutherstone?'

'Know you not,' replied the surly hind, 'he that owns those lands is lord Ralph Fitzhugh?'

'Show

'Show me then to the lady Theresa, my——' At this instant, an ancient domestic espying me, threw himself at my feet, and embracing my knees, burst into tears.

'Robert,' I cried, 'what means this? why do you weep? your answer—speak—where is my child?'

'Alas, my lord! I know not; but fly this place.' So saying, he led my horse from the gate; the reins dropped from my hand; I sat without motion, scarce knowing where I was, till he assisted me to dismount at a small house in the wood, just where the winding Balder falls into the Tees.—'Prepare,' he said, 'prepare yourself, my honoured master, for what I must unfold. After the death of lord Henry, his son, haughty and impetuous, demanded, rather than sued for your daughter's hand; her gentle nature recoiled; he mingled threats with entreaties. This is not the way to win youthful hearts, my lord—pardon me! On her continued refusal, he

claimed the castle and the lands as his own right; and seizing them, she fled.'

'Whither did she fly—to Raby?'

'Ah! no, my lord—she fled with—— she fled to——'

'To whom—with whom? Alas, my child,' I exclaimed, 'shall the curse of the count D'Aranjeus, indeed, be fulfilled? shall they extend beyond the grave? Oh, speak and kill me! why this hesitation, this cruel delay?'

"Robert threw himself at my feet—'Indeed, indeed, my lord, I knew not of her marriage.'

"I started—'Married!—to whom?—not to her cousin?'

'To no base-born hind; and yet—oh! say, my lord, say but you forgive her!'

'Torture me no longer, or I swear those grey hairs shall not protect thee.'

'Know then, she is the wife of lord Henry Beauchamp, the earl of Warwick's eldest son.'

"I was

"I was struck dumb with rage, with sorrow, with a thousand contending passions.

"At length, resolved to hear the whole, I allowed Mabel, the wife of Robert, to enter; she alone I found could inform me of my child, whose nurse she was. After much circumlocution, I learned that Theresa was upon a visit at Raby, where she met with lord Henry; mutually enamoured of each other, they carefully concealed their passion from the earl and his family, as Theresa felt all the force of her engagements with her cousin, whom now she had seen and detested; already did he seem to consider her as his mere property, nor did he take any pains to gain her affections, treating the fair heiress with a disdainful neglect; the winning and graceful manners of lord Henry, probably, rooted her aversion more deeply.

"The Beauchamps and I had been some time at variance, though formerly strict friends; what hopes then of an union? besides, a match had been proposed be-

 tween

tween your sister Margaret and lord Henry, who, though every way amiable, failed to interest his affections: after the death of lord Henry Fitzhugh, a flying report of my death immediately succeeded—an invention to distress my child, and throw her in the young lord's power.

"Lord Beauchamp visited Theresa in disguise at the house of her nurse, and easily persuaded a heart more than half-inclined, that the only way to avoid the persecution of her cousin would be to marry—'The earl,' said he, 'will soon forget his enmity to sir William; what need you then fear, under the protection of valour and love?' She was married, in the presence of Mabel, to lord Henry, by an aged priest, long resident in the family of Fitzhugh.

"You will wonder, no doubt, why Theresa did not seek the protection of the earl of Westmoreland; but the temper (excuse me, lady) of the countess, violent to excess, and jealous of the wealth, beauty,

and

and accomplishments of her (at that time) guest, made her readily believe the tales invented by my nephew; and the evident disinclination lord Henry discovered to the match with your sister Margaret, who, though not the countess's own child, yet her pride was equally interested in her being splendidly settled—every delay, every objection, was imputed to the encouragement given to his addresses by Theresa: this induced the countess to reproach her for not fulfilling those engagements she was bound to perform—'Your uncle,' said she, 'whom your father left guardian to you, is dead; who then so fit to protect you, as the husband appointed by sir William; expect not the lord of Raby will receive or protect a maiden who refuses to obey her parent's commands, who stirs up a noble youth to refuse his daughter, and to spurn at an alliance so honourable to himself.'

"Stung with indignation, with sorrow, to be so harshly questioned, so haughtily

commanded, where in her infant years she knew a more than parent's care, Theresa left Raby with a heavy heart, resolving never to apply there for advice or protection; she too well knew the influence his lady had over your father, who was at this time chiefly at court.

"Lord Beauchamp acquainted not the earl of Warwick with his marriage, but acknowledged his love for the fair heiress of Fitzhugh; he was forbidden to see her, and threatened, should he persist in his disobedience, that an angry father would disinherit him, and settle all his fortunes on his brother Richard; that he regarded not the boasted beauty, accomplishments, or vast possessions, of Theresa; he had insuperable objections to her—for he hated her father.

'Wait, my beloved Henry,' said his bride to lord Beauchamp; 'my father yet may return—the earl of Warwick yet may relent; let us not enrage him by declaring our marriage: conscious I am your wife,

wife, I can now better support the insults of one family, and the slights of the other.' She was now likely to give an heir to her lord, while the earl his father, scarce trusting him out of sight, took him to court.

"Theresa kept her room, under pretence of sickness, at once to avoid the persecutions of her cousin, and to conceal her situation; then begging he would allow her to go upon a pilgrimage, praying my safe return, to our Lady of Walsingham, and assuring him, if he granted this request, and I was not heard of in a year's time, she would resign her lands to him, did she still refuse to marry, a solemn contract was entered into for this purpose; meanwhile she was not to oppose his acting as lord of Cutherstone. At the head of the vassals, he now went to repel an invasion of the Scots, whilst the helpless victim of his power retired to the house of her nurse; 'where,' said Mabel, 'the loveliest boy I ever beheld first saw the light.'

light.' With tears was the cradle of the infant watered, as the hours of attendance were numbered by sighs. When lord Ralph came back from the borders, Mabel urged her mistress's return to the castle; the infant was sent with its nurse, the daughter of Mabel, and guarded by her husband to a village in the neighbourhood of Knaresborough, where this noble child was to pass as their own. 'Scarce was the lady Theresa,' continued the nurse, 'returned to the castle, before a page arrived from lord Beauchamp, saying he had eloped from his father, and begging she would meet him at Richmond, from whence they would proceed to Spain; this plan being already determined upon, if forced to extremities.'

"On Theresa's departure, her cousin dismissed all the old domestics, except Robert, who, as steward, knew the value of the land, and many particulars no one else could inform the new owner of. 'In vain,' cried Mabel, 'has all inquiry been;

she

she has not since been heard of. But this melancholy fact is certain—she went not to Richmond, nor met there her lord.'

"Distracted at what I heard, I demanded if lord Neville was now at Raby.

'Alas!' cried the faithful creature, 'had he been there, long ere now would Robert have applied to him, in despite of his lady; but lord Neville is at court.'

"In vain were the attempts of Robert and his spouse to detain me; I mounted my horse almost involuntarily, taking the road to the castle; and ere I reached it, I overtook the villain I fondly hoped would have been the protector of my child—'Traitor to thy name, thou base assassin! restore me my daughter, my Theresa!' I exclaimed, in a frantic tone, in a determined manner.

"His knees shook under him, and his whole frame was agitated; turning to his attendants, he cried—'Seize that madman! my life is in danger.'

"They advanced; I drew with one hand

my sword, whilst with the other I lifted my cap—' Behold,' I cried, ' your liege lord; know you not, base hinds! the father of the lady Theresa?'

" Struck by my manner, and filled with remorse, they fell at my feet, imploring my forgiveness. Enraged at this sight, he aimed his weapon at my head; I warded the danger, and felled him to the ground; in a daughter's cause, valour was fury; he was conveyed to the castle, apparently dead. The surgeon examined his wounds, and declared them mortal; the blood, it is true, was staunched; but upon his attempting to speak, it flowed afresh.

" Reduced to a state of weakness, which scarce could be termed existence, as the slightest motion renewed his fainting, Robert was dispatched to Richmond, and returned without tracing any account of lord Beauchamp or Theresa. My arrival being known, my vassals flocked round, avowing their ignorance of my nephew's treachery, and eagerly renewing their allegiance.

giance. Some hopes now appeared that the wounded wretch might be able to inform me where my child was. I had staid at Cutherstone, watching every change, in faint expectation some favourable moment of strength might be seized, thoroughly convinced he could inform me where Theresa might be found: with horror I entered his apartment; his agitations at seeing me, the surgeon feared, would again force open the wound, and I retired; but finding him the next day a little more composed, I again entered.

'I ask not, I hope not pardon,' uttered he; 'it is out of my power to atone for my crimes: but I must be brief. In Brittany I became acquainted with the lovely daughter of a noble lord, enamoured of whom, I delayed my return to England; I was conscious of my early engagements to my cousin; you wrote, stating the necessity of your journey to Spain, and hastening my long-delayed voyage. On your setting out to take possession of the vast estates

estates of the count D'Aranjeus, gay, volatile, and voluptuous, long ere this had Beatrice, seduced by the love I professed, yielded to my wishes; I could not resolve to see you, but no sooner had you set sail, than, accompanied by Beatrice, I embarked for England.

'The beauty, the accomplishments of Theresa, I regarded not; but her rich inheritance was beheld with eyes of desire, equally by Beatrice and myself: whilst lord Henry lived, I was obliged to conceal those wishes, but no sooner was he dead, than every engine was employed to accomplish our misled designs; all intercourse was suppressed between you; my brother, now lord Henry of Ravensworth, was absent in Ireland. To the lady Joan of Raby did I impart my feigned wishes of marrying the lovely heiress of Fitzhugh, whom I accused of levity in her conduct; that she meditated seducing the affections of her eldest son, though but a boy, that she might be secured of a noble alliance, in

in case the earl of Warwick should prevent her designs on his son; that it was evident her pride disdained me, whom her father had commanded her to espouse. These representations had the desired effect; Theresa was estranged from the hospitable walls of Raby, whilst I, in fact, was lord of Cutherstone, and Beatrice acted as its mistress. Urged by despair, she married lord Beauchamp; for this my active vigilance discovered.

'This marriage we kept secret from the earl of Warwick, whilst she, anxious to conceal her situation, readily agreed to the terms I proposed, when she pretended to pay her devotions to our Lady of Walsingham. The child was suffered to depart, hoping we could suppress, if necessary, all evidence of the marriage of its parents. In full possession of the castle, still we feared Theresa might either interest her friends at Raby in her behalf, or, appealing to the vassals, our ill-got possessions might be wrested from us. Dressing herself

self as a page of lord Beauchamp, Beatrice tempted her to fly, and take refuge in a small house built on the banks of the Eure; there was she confined; a plausible story was invented of her flight; but, impatient at hearing no tidings from them, the day you reached here, I set out to seek this accursed woman (yet why should I curse her? am I not equally guilty?) but finding a strange and unusual trembling seized me, and being thrice thrown from my horse, dissuaded by my attendants from proceeding, I returned to meet the punishment I so justly merit.'

'God,' I said, 'pardon thee!'

'Alas!' he returned, 'I dare not hope for mercy; if it is possible, ah! do not curse the wretch who is shortly to face a higher Judge—one who has no weaknesses to be touched, no passions to be seduced.'

"A noise on the staircase now called our attention; the door opening, one of the most elegant forms rushed in I ever beheld; her hair dishevelled, and hanging

loose

loose over her shoulders, her countenance seemed wild and almost frantic; in a foreign accent, she exclaimed—'Where, oh! where is this destroyer of my peace!' and she threw herself upon the bed.—'Know, lord Ralph, you shall not escape; they would not allow me to enter—they told me you were dying, so shall I too—but this one embrace—then farewell; oh! farewell, for ever.' He seemed to shrink with horror.

'Where—oh! tell me where is my daughter, thou wretch?' I exclaimed.

"She started up—'And whom,' she cried, 'art thou? who is thy daughter? she is not, cannot be such a miserable being as I am. Has she left a noble parent's house to follow a stranger, as I have done? hast thou cursed her, as they did me? wilt thou die as they did? will it be told her, she was thy murderer? was she tortured with jealousy, as I have been? did she take all shapes to please a lover, as I have done? has her fair fame been

blasted?

blasted? does she see her lover dying before her face, and for her crimes, as I do now? and yet I live—ah! no, no; what is thy daughter then compared to me?' And she again cast herself down.

'Tell me,' I solemnly cried, 'as you hope for mercy, what you have done with the lady Theresa?'

'I hope not mercy—why torture me to distraction? why ask me of lady Theresa? She is with her husband, three miles from Rippon; if you wish to see her, haste, for she too is dying. Oh, shield me, Fitzhugh! saw you not that pale form?'

"Her face suddenly appeared convulsed, her eyes glared; we attempted to raise her, but she cried—'Here will I die—savages! will you separate us? Alas! what guilt have I committed!—all—all—but to purchase this poor privilege, to die with my Fitzhugh! Nay, curse me not, my father! look not so sternly! Once you loved your Beatrice; that curse lies heavy on her.'

"Her

"Her senses wandering, again she leaped from the bed, and fell at my feet. Although conscious of her guilt, of all the misery she had been the fatal cause of, I wept as I raised her, and was assisting in taking her out of the apartment.

'Ah! not so,' she cried; 'a little, little longer, I shall be but a heap of dust—the poison works. Fitzhugh, see you not, they drag me to a convent; help! oh, help! the time was you would not have suffered this; you hate me now — yes, take your fair, your rich Theresa;—hush, speak not so, my lord! I tell you she detests you — lord Beauchamp too; blame not me if the child died; it is natural to die—I shall die soon.'

"She then sunk into strong convulsions, during which she was removed; and soon after, I was told, had expired before she could receive the last rites of the holy church, though her confessor attended; with him I left orders for her private interment, and set out, attended by the

the page of the miserable Beatrice as a guide, in search of my daughter, leaving Fitzhugh scarce a remove from death, through the recent agitation.

"The Breton informed me, he had accompanied his mistress and lady Theresa, who, weak before from indisposition, was hardly able to sit on horseback, but eager to reach the place where she was to meet, as she imagined, her lord, Beatrice pretending they were to go bye-roads, for fear of pursuit; and she bore up cheerfully.

"At length she discovered the deceit, yet in vain were her entreaties; Beatrice conveyed her to the cottage she had provided for her reception. 'Here did the lady Theresa,' continued the page, 'give herself up to despair, and evidently was fast sinking under her afflictions.

'Walking along the banks of the river with her charge, the second evening, they perceived something floating on the surface of the water; as it drew nearer, they saw it was the body of a woman; urged by

by compassion, Beatrice ordered it to be dragged on shore; and no sooner did Theresa behold it than she exclaimed—'Ah! my child!' and fainted. The body was known by all present to be the daughter of Robert, the steward.

'Attracted by the noise, a monk, who belonged to the neighbouring abbey of Fountaine, accompanied by a young knight, appeared on the opposite shore, who, inquiring what had occasioned the alarm they heard, were informed of the circumstance.

'Let then,' said the monk, 'your pious cares give interment to the drowned wretch.'

'Whilst we were conveying the lady Theresa to the cottage, having crossed the river by a bridge, a little below, we met the monk and his companion, who was now known to be lord Beauchamp; then imagine, for I cannot describe,' continued the Breton, 'the different emotions of love, joy, surprise, and horror, pictured on the

the countenance of lady Theresa and her lord upon this sudden encounter; she, bursting from us, fell senseless into his arms. We staid not,' said the Breton, 'to see the issue, but mounting horses, which always stood caparisoned, made our escape to Cutherstone, where we learnt your return, and the dangerous situation of Fitzhugh. Almost frantic with grief and rage, the unhappy Beatrice swallowed poison she had prepared for Theresa, ere she entered her lover's apartment, declaring she would die in his presence.'

"Although," continued father Ambrose, "I naturally concluded, as I found Theresa had done, the infant son of lord Beauchamp perished with his nurse, yet the hopes of soon again embracing my daughter made me scarce think of the misfortune. Should the earl of Warwick, thought I, indeed disinherit his son, yet can he not bequeath his title; and the Spanish estates of my Theresa will compensate for the loss of those of Beauchamp.

Such

Such were my reflections till I reached the banks of the Eure.

"The cottage stood, but it stood empty. I supposed lord Beauchamp had, with Theresa, retired to Fountaine; thither I hastened; as I approached, the solemn sound of death was echoed from the steeple to each neighbouring hill; each toll of the bell seemed to strike upon the heart. The doors of the church were thrown open, and the service for the dead was performing; I entered, but struck with horror, remained at the foot of the aisle; the gleam of the torches diffused a kind of melancholy light, that accorded with the solemn scene and my reflections.

"The body was interred, the service ceased, the silence only broke by the heart-rending sighs of a person I saw not. Now the last anthem was sung, and the sound filled the choir with a mournful harmony—I scarce breathed. Again all was silence; advancing from where I heard these piercing groans, a youth, clad

in

in sable, approached the high altar; kneeling before it, he solemnly vowed never more to taste sustenance till he had brought to their just punishment the murderers of his child—the murderers of his wife—invoking Heaven's vindictive justice. My fears were realized; I groaned and fell upon the pavement; my attendants made known who I was, and lord Beauchamp, assisted by the pious fathers, conveyed me to a bed. Every possible care was taken of me, by my poor child's husband, during a violent fever, which brought me 'nigh to the grave.' On the recovery of my strength and my senses, lord Beauchamp, who never removed from my bedside, informed me he had, impatient to see again his wife, eloped from his father, and visited Fountaine ere he went to Cutherstone, to consult father Benedict, who had been the intimate friend of the earl of Warwick, and who still preserved an influence in his heart. The good monk had counselled lord Henry to

stay

stay in the convent, lest by going to the castle of Theresa, he might expose them both to danger, whilst he, by leave of his superior, went to entreat the earl to pardon his son, and protect from her kinsman's malice the fair heiress of Cutherstone.

'You have already,' continued lord Beauchamp, 'been informed of our meeting, but know not that the instant of our meeting was the last of her life; throwing her arms with a convulsive grasp of rapture around me, she ceased to respire.

'Why need I recall our woes to your mind? the child, the dear pledge of my Theresa's love, has been searched for in vain. Dorothy floating down the stream, is sufficient to assure us his fate was the same. My friend, father Benedict, is returned from Salwarpe; the earl comes to Barnard Castle, where he will receive me; too late comes his consent—'Yes,' he said, 'with joy would he acknowledge my wife and child—all contention should be

 buried—

buried—he would assert her rights—already is my father at the Castle of Barnard.'

"By slow journeys we reached the castle of earl Warwick; we embraced again as friends, and wept together over the strange, the melancholy events so recently past.—The estates of the earl were settled on the infant of Theresa after his father, if, by any uncommon chance, he should have been preserved.

"I found, on my return home, my unhappy nephew recovered so far as to ride out; his brother coming from Ireland, flew to him as soon as he heard of his illness, and by his care and attention had contributed principally to his recovery.

"Anxiously did the penitent inquire after the victim of his arts; when told of her death, he cried—'Impute not this, oh merciful God! to the wretched Beatrice! misled by her fatal attachment, I, and I alone, was the cause.'

"Fitzhugh now declared his resolution

to enter the neighbouring monastery of Athelstone, adding to the building, and endowing this new foundation with his whole possessions."

Touched with pity, I inquired of the hermit what had become of this unhappy man?

"I was going," he rejoined, "to inform you; I gave my estate to lord Henry Fitzhugh, with this proviso, that if ever the child of Theresa should be found, he was to resign it.

"My, or rather Theresa's, estates in Spain, were in the same manner vested in the hands of don Juan, who hearing of my misfortunes, made a voyage to England to visit me; before he departed, in the church where rested the bones of my child, I took the monastic vows.

"Lord Beauchamp resolving to end a life he could no longer enjoy, went into Hungary, where, in an engagement with the infidels, he fell; his faithful 'squire bore his heart to England; I assisted at

the solemn service performed when it was deposited, as he requested, by his lamented wife. Despairing of the hopes I had flattered myself with, of the infant Henry having escaped death, I obtained leave of my superiors, and retired to this solitary forest to end my days. About the time I quitted the abbey of Fountaine, my unfortunate nephew died at the monastery of Athelstone, worn out by penitence and severity of mortifications."

Our attention was enchained by the sad tale; new to distress, we had given it many a tear—"And you are indeed," I cried, "sir William Fitzhugh, the uncle of lord Henry! I remember once, when a child, seated upon my father's knee, weeping as I heard him talk to the countess of his unhappy, his lost friend; and once, I recollect, he said to my brother Richard, pointing to lord Henry's castle—'Ah! how sadly looks the spot which was once the residence of the dearest friend of my heart! Ah!' said he, striking his fore-

head

head, 'why, why was I absent? ah! why did your mother listen to the false tales of Ralph Fitzhugh? at Raby too, where the fair Theresa had known a parent's care, or parent's love, there to be treated unkindly, where she ought alone to have sought and found protection.'

'Alas!' replied my brother, 'then was I too young to defend the lovely heiress! I knew not her sad story."

Thomalin seemed lost in thought, then raising his eyes, he threw them upon the hermit; they were swimming in tears— "Ah, my father!" he exclaimed, "will you grant my prayer? on my knees, again I entreat you to allow my stay with you; I have no ties, no friends, but the family of lord Westmoreland; you have opened my eyes to my danger; I stood on the brink of a precipice, yet was not conscious of my situation. Oh! I see all the misery that must be caused by my——"

Here he stopped, a blush glowed over his fine features—"I do not wish," re-

 sumed

sumed he, after a pause, "to be ungrateful; ah! you know not the weight of my obligations to the house of Raby!"

"Talk not of obligations—are they not," I said, "already discharged? have you not saved my life?"

"Cease this contest, my children," cried the good Ambrose; "the night advances, let us retire to rest; should we hear no more of your pursuers, I will accompany you through the forest to-morrow; every winding path, each brake and deep morass, I know the trace of."

Again did Thomalin urge the request he had before made to the hermit, who replied—"Urge me no further—scarce entered into life, you are ignorant of what you would renounce; you owe to society much; those talents, those graceful and active limbs, were not given to you in vain; it is not in this lone cell you can fulfil the duties imposed on each member of society; yet, if you will visit sometimes father Ambrose, he will embrace you as a

son; looking on you, he will learn to forget the past, he will forget he is no longer sir William Fitzhugh; and beholding you, see renewed both his Theresas. Tell me, my son, where first you breathed, and what are your obligations to the noble family of Neville? for there is something in your air which says you are rather born to confer than to receive favours."

"The first remembrance I have," replied the youth, "was of living near the foot of a high mountain, on whose bleak sides I watched with my father a flock of sheep; a band of Scots burnt our cottage, and employed us in driving our sheep towards the borders.

"Sir Robert Umfraville attacked the plunderers; I knew not what became of my father; killed I suppose in the fray, I became a second time as it were a prisoner; my looks attracted sir Robert's attention; he pitied my orphan state, and receiving me into his family, I accompanied him to Raby, on his marriage with Ann,

the daughter of the earl of Westmoreland by his first lady; nearly of his age, her brother Thomas professed his fondness for me; sir Robert complied with his wishes; I became the page of this noble youth, was his friend, his confidant: but illness, when last he attended the countess to court, prevented my accompanying him. Ah! would I had never beheld the lofty towers of Raby! would I had fallen with my father, or that, far from the banks of the Tees, the brave sir Robert Umfraville had trained my youth to arms!"

"Hush, my son!" said the hermit, sighing; "repine not at your fate, yet it may be an enviable one; return to your benefactor; let him not accuse you of ingratitude."

Long after I had retired to my couch, I heard father Ambrose and Thomalin in earnest conversation.

"I acknowledge," said the latter, "my presumption; yet believe me, I knew not what name to give the soft emotion I

felt;

felt; I was not conscious I had dared to love the daughter of the earl of Westmoreland till you showed me my danger.

"How shall I return to the hospitable walls of my benefactor! Alas! what torture must I endure, to see for ever before me the object of my idolatry, conscious of her rank, conscious I subsist upon the bounty—merciful Heavens! yes, bred up on the charity of the house of Raby, never—no, never will I declare my love; no. I will sooner tear out the rebellious heart that dared—oh my father!—dared to love her."

I sighed.—"Ah!" thought I, "which of my sisters can it be? Jane, no doubt—yet Jane, had she never known sir Alexander, would not have loved this amiable youth as he deserves." I had stretched myself out of my bed, so that I heard now distinctly every word.

"What excuse would you allege to the earl, were you not to return? give not thus, my child, scope to passion, which

will consume you, but try to combat it; recollect the pride of Joan of Westmoreland is a sufficient bar; think how dreadful a parent's curse!"

The page, as if he had not attended to the good father, exclaimed—"Ah! yes, the lady Cicely said, I must not, should not leave her; that gentle heart does not despise the companion of her childish days; yes, she seemed to forget, as she spoke, as her soft voice dwelt on my ear, that she was the daughter of Westmoreland, or that I was her brother's page, the son of a herdsman—shame on my folly and presumption!"

I scarce breathed, yet felt a new kind of sensation of pleasure; is it then indeed Cicely who is so dear to this charming youth? why, how could I be so blind! and is this love I too feel? Oh! if it is, let me also dwell with father Ambrose; I am infinitely happier than the splendid halls of my noble ancestors can ever render me with its gaudiest inhabitant.

"Flatter

" Flatter not yourself with vain hopes, my son," said the hermit; " what, would you wish this lovely, this noble lady, an outcast from her family on your account? could you bear it? would to God you were indeed my son! then might you avow a flame which would not be spurned. I feel for you the affection of a father; and was not your birth so mean, I still have it in my power to enrich you; for beneath this floor is buried a splendid fortune, all the receipts of my lost Theresa's estates: this freely would I give, was it to make you happy; but well I know it would not avail, nor procure the consent of the earl and countess of Westmoreland."

" I will not struggle with my fate," exclaimed the youth; " I conjure you, oh my father! to let me return to you, or here (and he knelt at the foot of the holy crucifix) I solemnly swear, since life can only end my love for the beauteous, the noble maid, as I want fortitude to bear, I will resign—yes, I will violently end a wretch-

ed being, that might, in spite of my resolution, affect the object of my love; no, I will never enter again the halls of Raby. On the bank or the steep rock which overhangs the Tees, where Cicely flew from the swords of the ruffian Scots, the life of her brother's page shall wear away in pining solitude."

I could contain myself no longer; bursting out of the small apartment, "Ah! why," I cried, "talk you of dying? you love me not; how could a life, which you would have resigned to serve me, ever offend? you, whom I have loved equally with my brothers, hear me also swear;" and I too knelt—he threw his arms round me. The hermit silently, and as it were instinctively, joined our hands; a tear dropped on them.

A violent knocking was heard at the door, and a voice loudly uttered—"Delay not, if you wish lady Cicely to reach again her friends—open to me immediately."

The door opened, we beheld the Scottish

tish leader; I started and hid my face on the shoulder of Thomalin—"Save, save me," I cried.

"I come," said the Scot, "to save you, lady; you know I have endeavoured to alleviate your sufferings; a vassal of Douglas, I knew not what I came to do: I privately watched your flight, I saw you enter the cell, and now have disposed of the Scots so that you may escape: but haste—in a short time it will be impossible, as they propose again scouring the banks, nor will they quit the forest till they find you, certain you are still here; the night wears fast, and should we not be clear of the wood ere morning, we must be taken."

The hermit insisted upon accompanying us; and mounted upon horses the Scot had provided, we set out.

The last star had twinkled in the west ere we had gone half our journey, and distant was the edge of the wood from us, when a party of our pursuers appeared—

"Quickly

"Quickly bind my arms," cried our deliverer; "so shall I make it appear I have not been the means of your escaping, and yet I may live to serve you."

The ruffians advanced, and their leader renewing his command, informed them we had seized the horses, and binding him, had forced him with us.

In vain is it, my dear Matilda, to repeat the hardships we underwent, in spite of Gilbert's endeavours to serve us. In passing through Cumberland, we were near being overtaken by a party of lord Dacre's vassals; the whole country was in commotion, and under arms, yet still the vigilance of our enemies (who were accustomed to such expeditions) found means to elude all pursuit; afraid of lord Dacre's men, whose valour they had tried, they made a sudden turn to the sea, where, finding two small fishing-boats, I, with a party of the Scots, was put into one, whilst sir William, Thomalin, and Gilbert, went with the remainder in the other: notwith-

standing

standing Gilbert proposed me to embark with him, the ruffian crew insisted I was to be alone: scarce had we got from land, when the troop of lord Dacre appeared on the shore; they shouted aloud to us, then rode at full gallop along the coast, in hopes, I conjectured, to find a vessel, in which they might overtake us. The wind was fair, and in a few hours the Scots expected to land in their own country. Vain were their hopes; it changed, and blew us off the coast; the sky was suddenly overcast, and a violent storm of wind succeeded; we quickly lost sight of the other boat, and giving myself up for ever, I lay down in the bottom, without a wish to survive. The waves broke over and drenched us in water; I lay insensible of my danger, till roused by being lifted into a ship, where I was partly revived. On being conveyed into the cabin, I found myself accosted by a gentleman with much politeness, who, in a Scottish accent, begged I might consider myself as safe, for that he would pro-

tect

tect me.—"The storm," said he, "is abated, and every accommodation in my power shall be made to render you comfortable—would I could serve you more effectually!"

I felt a confidence in him, for his manner recalled to my imagination the ill-fated sir Alexander Home.

Changing my wet garments, I laid me down, worn out by fatigue and sea-sickness. I slept, but my dreams presented to me the graceful form of my lover, his charming countenance and expressive features. Now kneeling, I thought I beheld him at the foot of the cross, swearing to live only whilst he loved me, as the venerable Ambrose bent over us; now in garments dripping wet, he lay pale, extended on a bier.

Morning dispelled these airy phantoms, and the humane Scotchman begged I would admit him: we now recognised each other; it was sir Archibald Seton, who had, with the gallant Home, visited us on the

the borders; equally surprised at the rencounter, we mutually inquired what strange circumstance had brought us together; he, I found, was going to France with a small number of troops; informed of my story, he expressed his regret that he could not land me in England, but hoped, when he reached France, to restore me to my friends.

Confiding in his offers, I thought myself safe, but could not feel happy; the loss of my lover, and a presentiment of the fate that pursued me, darkened all my prospects. Upon our landing in Normandy, I accompanied the generous Seton to the castle of a nobleman, the lord St. Aubin.

My story was here made known, and conscious of the importance of having the daughter of the powerful house of Neville, and so near a relation to the king of England, on the eve of war, they resolved to detain me. My noble friend was obliged to leave me; with tears in his eyes, he bade me adieu, assuring me of his taking such

steps

steps as he doubted not would release me; already had he sent a messenger to the earl my father.

I felt, on his leaving the apartment, as if deprived of all support; anxiously I spent weeks without any tidings from the generous Scot; and learned at last, that irritated by being refused what he had asked for me of the duke of Orleans, he had set sail for England, but it was feared had perished at sea.

Thus vanished all my hopes of liberty; ah! would I oft exclaim in my native tongue, that I had perished (for too sure they did perish) with the venerable sir William and the youth I so loved! Gilbert too, the penitent Gilbert, I envy your fate, who died beside them. My spirits now sunk to a state of extreme dejection, then again a faint gleam of hope would cheer me; the boat which held my lover might be safe—it might reach the Irish coast—I might again behold them. Thus day after day, and week after week, passed

away,

away, my soul rent by various kinds of anguish; new to distress, I had not then learned to bear the sad, sad task, since so severely inflicted on me. The sanguine hopes of early youth, spite of what I felt, gave at times a fairer colouring to the dreary prospects around me; and I would fancy some chance, equally as providential, might have saved my lover; he might also be in France, he might be near, perhaps in the same prison; and a single wall might part us as effectually as a thousand miles.

It was now the beginning of August, and the English had landed in Normandy with the king at their head.—"Ah!" thought I, "Henry is not unattended by the Nevilles, though the earl is left to guard the Scottish borders."

At this time my lord St. Aubin was gone to join the troops; his lady and myself were but slightly guarded, most of the vassals following their lord.

By lady St. Aubin I was treated with much

much politeness, and should have felt all the esteem her character could merit, had I been differently situated; but I considered her as my jailer, and trembled as she approached me.

Coming one morning into my apartment by daybreak—"Rise," said she, "my dear child; let me bid you adieu; a detachment of the English approaches to seize this castle, we cannot oppose them: soon, lady, will you see again your friends; soon, I trust, will you be restored to your country; remember not, I entreat, with resentment, her who was obliged in duty to detain you, yet, forgetting the misery your countrymen are everywhere bringing upon France, loves you with the affection of a sister."

Then I felt all the force of my ingratitude for her kindness—fully felt all the obligations I was under to this amiable woman, whose pity made me only feel in idea that I was a prisoner; I burst into tears—we embraced—"Cicely," I cried,

"can

"can never forget what she owes you; she will bear with her to England the remembrance of your compassion to an enemy and a captive; this desolating war I hope will soon cease: we may again meet as friends, as dearer friends."

We stood on the battlements as the English advanced; the earl of Westmoreland was at their head. with him were my brothers Richard and Ralph. Overcome by this sight, I forgot my danger, forgot every thing, but that by rushing forward I should be with my friends.

"Behold," I exclaimed, "my father, the lost Cicely;" and attempted to fling myself over the parapet, but, ere I fell, was caught by those who stood near me.

"Why," said lady St. Aubin, "this madness? a short delay would have restored you to your father—compose yourself—I insist upon your returning to your apartment."

My refusal was peremptory; supporting myself

myself against the parapet, I stood viewing the English as they marched to the drawbridge, which was let down for their entrance; by a way we had not perceived their advance, a party of French on horseback came up at full gallop, greatly superior in numbers to the English, whom they nearly encompassed ere they were aware of their danger; led by the earl, they slowly retreated, their course marked by the dead and wounded. What were my sensations at this sudden reverse of fortune! a few minutes longer I should have been clasped to the breast of my parent: those fond hopes were crushed almost ere they were born; and I beheld my loved father and my brothers, so nearly on the point of delivering me from captivity, now overpowered by numbers, and apparently resolved to die rather than yield.

"Ah! would to God," I exclaimed, "I had thrown myself down! I should have died in my father's arms, he would have

closed

closed the eyes of his unhappy child; I should have received his blessing—alas! I may live till he hurls a curse upon me."

My aching eyes distinguished no more the banners of my countrymen, nor were the French troops longer seen.

In an agony of despair, I turned to lady St. Aubin—"Restore me," I hastily cried, "I conjure you, to my father! why thus cruelly detain me? why am I, a defenceless, unarmed woman, to be the sacrifice of war?—Oh, perhaps, even whilst I speak, my father is dying under his wounds—permit me to attend him; let me go, let me share in his dangers; the prayers, the constant, the ardent prayers of a lost, careworn wretch, shall importune Heaven and all its saints to guard you; yes, to guard the baron too, even he who keeps me thus a captive."

Overcome by my agitation, I should have sunk, had not the amiable baroness supported me; whilst the little Isabella, clasping her hands in my garments, imprinted

printed her rosy lips on my arm, then bursting into tears, sobbed out—" Leave me not, dear lady! let her not, mamma, leave us. Though you are English, and when you first came to the castle, I understood you not, even then did I love you. Oh, stay! I will soon pick you the ripe grapes, then will you say I am kind, then will you kiss again, and say you love your Isabella."

" Hush, my child!" said her mother: " be calm, my sweet charge—I will write to the duke of Orleans, I will entreat for your liberty, he will not refuse."

She drew my arm through hers, and descending, insisted upon my going to bed, and that a surgeon should attend me. Lady St. Aubin sat by me, watching every turn of my countenance; soothed by her kindness, I was restored to some degree of composure, and ere night she left me to the care of my woman.

Awaking next morning, I found the baroness again by my side—" I have," said

she,

she, "news to communicate, will rejoice you, lady, though to me it is sad indeed; the earl of Westmoreland, gallantly retreating, has joined the army commanded by the king of England, whilst the unfortunate St. Aubin, who led the troops to relieve the castle, too rashly pursuing, is made prisoner."

"Thanks, gracious Heavens! for this preservation of my father," I ejaculated; "and, my dear lady, the baron need not be long detained; the earl will learn your generous treatment of me; it deserves his gratitude, and an Englishman's gratitude is seldom long unpaid; I too shall be restored to my friends."

"Ah, my child!" replied the baroness, "may those hopes be realized!—I must leave you; St. Aubin is wounded; I go to entreat the English will allow me to attend him: would I durst offer you to accompany me! but the baron swore to the duke of Orleans, who is liege-lord of this castle, never to deliver the daughter of West-

 moreland

moreland without his orders: the duke is expected here to-day—I will entreat for your liberty."

"Oh! leave me not, my beloved lady! leave me not in the power of this gay prince! alas! at an age when still I may be called a child, I have undergone severity of trials. Ah, quit me not!" and I threw my arms around her, and sinking, clung a suppliant at her knees.

"Lady Cicely," said my guardian, in a more solemn tone, "you are a sacred deposit; hold you the descendant of the gallant Charles the Fifth devoid of honour? ere the sun sets to-morrow on those towers, we shall again embrace in the English camp—you will be restored to your father."

I sighed.

The duke's arrival was announced; lady St. Aubin left me to receive his highness. The tears trickled down my cheeks, in despite of the thought, that perhaps a few hours, and I might be restored to my father; he would rejoice to behold his long-

lost

lost child; soon should I see again the chalky cliffs of my dear native country; even now the wind sets fair for England..

A sadness overspread me, remembering how I left the shores of Cumberland, remembering him who had shared in all my dangers, who would have died to save me; yes, who did die to save me. Oh! it is no crime against duty to say how I loved, how I still love; yes, thy Cicely will, with her sister, devote her life to a convent, and divide her thoughts and prayers betwixt thee and her God. Lord Westmoreland, can you refuse me? you will never know your child gave up her heart to her brother's page, the son of a herdsman; yet, could that be possible? no, no, it could not be; that mien was noble, that air was grace itself: born to tend a flock of sheep, never would he have acquired each martial exercise—never would he have excelled in every winning accomplishment; yes, he far outstripped even the sons of the house of Raby. Was it for

the child of a poor peasant to accomplish this? no, no, sir Robert Umfraville, equally with Thomalin, has been deceived; ah, what avails it now! cold is his form—the salt waves roll over him. Ah! that I enjoyed the melancholy satisfaction his venerable friend so feelingly enjoyed, when, in the abbey of Fountaine, he saw the last pious offices performed for his lost Theresa! that is denied me; I shuddered at the recollection: can a parent's curse extend indeed from generation to generation?'

"Ah! curse me not, my father, as the rash count D'Aranjeus cursed his daughter; yet she loved, and married a knight renowned in arms. I loved, and would have married——"

Lady St. Aubin entered—"You have been in tears, my child—compose yourself; the duke proposes your being exchanged for St. Aubin, leaving in the power of the earl, either to have you sent to-day to the English army, or he will send a vessel for England with you."

'Is

"Is it," I cried, "possible?"

"The duke," returned the baroness. "now writes to your father, whilst a herald stands, behold" (and she pointed out of the window), "at the gate, to convey it to the camp; sure now you believe—go with me, my love! the duke expects you to pay your respects to him."

"Yes, my lady, I will attend you; and throwing myself at his highness's feet, thank him, fervently thank him."

Lady St. Aubin led me into the apartment, where, at the upper end, sat the duke writing; he did not observe us till I knelt, when, starting from his seat, he raised me ere I could articulate a single word.

"What fair vision is this?" exclaimed he, in accents of surprise; "is this, lady St. Aubin, the daughter of the earl of Westmoreland? from this sample, the English may conquer France by their women, not their scarecrow soldiers; sure

 such

such a form, such a face, was not bred in the cold, foggy climate of England; and did you, lady, kneel to me, who ought to kneel to you, as something more than human?"

"I came, my lord," said I, haughtily, "at lady St. Aubin's desire, to thank you for your intention of restoring me to my friends: when insult wounds captivity, the chains are doubly galling."

"Such," rejoined the duke, "was my intention, but then I knew not the rich prize that glittered unseen in my possession; what! exchange you for a baron? No, I will not thus disparage beauty, nor, (turning to lady St. Aubin) fear for your husband; again shall he be restored to you: but this lovely damsel may prove the ransom of a prince in whose veins flows royal blood; here she is not safe; I will be her escort to a place of more security."

Trembling as he spake, I raised my head to take a survey of him; his large

blue

blue eyes met mine, with an expression which made me not dare to lift them up again.

In vain did the charming baroness entreat for my remaining where I was; in vain did she offer to accompany me. Terrified at this unexpected stroke, I stood motionless, till, bursting into tears, I wept in lady St. Aubin's arms.—" Leave, ah, leave me not, my guardian! alas! what shall next befall the wretched Cicely, deprived of every comfort!"

Unmoved by my distress, and equally deaf to the entreaties of the baroness, I was obliged to bid her adieu; at parting, she promised to throw herself at the feet of the dauphin Louis, begging my release; somewhat reassured by this, I quitted lady St. Aubin more composed, though hopeless still.

After a journey of several days, we arrived at an antique castle on the banks of the Loire, originally a royal palace; the apartments were large and stately, but

they had scarce been visited by its royal owners since the family of Valois had sat upon the throne of France; it was falling to ruins, when bequeathed by Charles the Fifth to his son Louis, duke of Orleans, father to him who now owned it; nor had he even long resided there: of course, the furniture remained venerable, but decayed, never being altered since it was the favourite palace of Philip the Fair; the rooms were decorated with the portraits of all the kings of France, from Pepin to Louis the Tenth, together with many of the queens. Nothing indeed could be conceived more gloomy; the towers, hung with ivy, sheltered every ominous bird; I was only lulled to sleep with shrieking owls, and waked with the croaking of the raven; a large forest, whose spreading boughs had stood unmolested by the axe since the creation, surrounded the castle so close, we scarce could discern the river which ran within a few yards of it: this was my habitation.

Here

Here I was obliged to listen to the protestation of the duke's love, whilst my heart was still bleeding with the recollection of the loss of the amiable youth to whom I had given all my affections; yet entirely in the power of the prince, I durst not irritate him by an absolute refusal.

"If," I would say, "you wish to gain that heart you call obdurate and cruel, restore me to my family; rest assured I shall hate you less than while you persist in my detention; give me my liberty, then shall my choice be free; do you wish to owe my hand to compulsion? my heart you cannot obtain by force, it must make its own election; will it then love you, who at best are but my jailer? it is not, my lord, in my nature to be ungrateful; it is possible, without compulsion, I may visit again the towers of Bidet; the earl of Westmoreland would not refuse when the duke of Orleans condescended to entreat."

"Shall the grandson of Charles the Fifth hazard a refusal from the haughty Westmoreland? never, fair one—never: to you alone my proud spirit sues, nor shall you leave me till your heart subdued meets mine with equal ardour; no, Cicely, the united force of France and England shall not wrest you from me."

My eyes spoke the answer my lips disdained to avow; I looked up, and surveyed a figure truly elegant.

"Do I live," continued he, "to be refused by a girl, an English child—I, for whom the fairest women in Europe have sighed? Go, little obstinate, go! you wish to show your power, but dearly shall you repent that wish ere you quit the towers of Bidet."

Although he thus threatened, he ever treated me with that politeness the French court are remarked for, and the most scrupulous delicacy could not have condemned him.

At this time the government of France

was lodged in the hands of this prince; of course, you might suppose, Matilda, I could not see him often; yet his ardent and active disposition made me almost annihilate space; and after travelling, through the night, an incredible number of miles, have I seen him at Bidet in the morning, although, in the preceding day, I had received letters from him, dated in some distant province.

How flattering to a young mind was this ardour of affection, could I have ceased to regret the charming youth whose image was indelibly impressed on my heart! the tender assiduities and respectful attentions of this elegant and accomplished prince must have gained the entire affections of a girl so totally inexperienced in the world; but guarded by my early passion, though the object, I doubted not, had ceased to exist, every smile I bestowed on the duke appeared as treason to my widowed love; the duke thoroughly understood each avenue to the female heart,

every passion did he assail; now he tried to rouse the ambitious ideas so carefully inculcated by my mother, and talked of his descent by Valentina, and consequent right to the future sovereignty of Milan—of his present power, his vast possessions in France, whose arms were subservient to his will; was he once assured of my love, he would lead it as I pleased.

Thus wore away the months of autumn, and the falling leaves that rustled on the almost-trackless paths proclaimed the approach of winter, when, coming hastily one day into my apartment, the duke exclaimed—"You wish to render me wretched, cruel Cicely! young as you are, you have learned all the artifice of your sex; has that heart already felt, ere you saw, at the castle of St. Aubin, him you triumph over, the soft impression of love? if so, pity what I feel: or do you despise the ardent passion of the unhappy Orleans? it is but too true, you hate, you detest me; but this day shall end the conflict.

flict, it shall fix my destiny. Hear my final resolution: Love and hatred are nearly allied; a priest attends to make you irrevocably mine; refuse, and the most dreary apartment in the castle of Bidet shall be your cell. No more shall the haunts of your childhood, so often regretted, meet your eyes; no more shall you behold your father, your kindred, your country. To revenge my unrequited love, I will raise each vassal, strain every nerve, and extirpate those invading English from the earth; wasted by sickness, they are now endeavouring to retreat from Harfleur to Calais; a numerous and well-appointed army watch their motions; a few days and they will be our prisoners, or madly resisting, be cut to atoms. Consent to my wishes, I will step forward and rescue your famishing countrymen; I will give them honourable terms and safe escort to England; and were this refused me by my countrymen, for you—yes, Cicely, possessed of

of you, I would renounce my king, my country, every tie that binds society, join my arms to your cousin Henry's, secure his safety, and confirm his success. Do you still refuse? reflect, proud girl! speak—am I to save these devoted English? am I to save from death, or a gloomy dungeon, the earl of Westmoreland? it is you who raise, who nerve this arm in their defence; it is you who draw the sword against your father.

"Your name may be joined, in the prayers of the matron, for her husband saved; the mother for her sons; the maiden, as she again beholds her lover, shall bless you; the infant will be taught to lisp out Cicely, her country's deliverer—her father's safeguard; and consecrated roofs shall echo back your name. Do you yet hesitate?—think."

"Oh, leave me—leave me, my lord! let me recall my wandering senses; allow me, only allow me till to-morrow; I know not what

what I would say; yet to-morrow, gracious God! shall you know my last, my final resolve."

"Trifle," he rejoined, "no longer; already am I waited for; a messenger arrived from the camp an hour ago; I must be in Picardy within two days; my presence is indispensable; my enemies will not fail to take advantage of my absence; soon may I fall from my power."

"Leave me not, good my lord, in anger;" and I held out my hand to him, which he took and raised to his lips, with an emotion that nearly overcame me; and had he not retreated immediately, I should perhaps have acquiesced in proposals so flattering. Perplexed and agitated, I traversed the apartment with unequal steps, then throwing myself on the ground, in idea saw my father, my brothers, my countrymen, captives and in chains. Ah! had I my beloved sister Percy, the gentle Eleanor, to console, to advise me! yet would she say—"Hesitate not, Cicely,

to

to save my father—dear parent."—Jane, the noble-minded Jane, thou knowest not what I suffer—ah! had I thy firm spirit, was my fortitude like thine, thy presence would awe even the haughty Orleans—thou wouldst rise superior to him; alike insensible to threats and promises, thy noble soul would steer through those quicksands which finally must overwhelm thy wretched sister.—I refused to admit my woman, whom the duke repeatedly sent to attend me: the moon, which rose and shed a faint light through the gloomy windows of my apartment, saw me pale as its beams, and almost as insensible as the floor on which I lay extended—"Thou viewest," said I, sighing, "chaste orb, the walls of Raby; beholdest thou my sisters deploring their poor lost Cicely? does the countess weep my fate? my lady St. Aubin, you in vain endeavour my release. Alas! how ineffectually have you pleaded! why did Nature bestow so large a share of that beauty on me, which but too well adorns the

the Nevilles? it has been given us as a curse."

But the service I might render my country, my king, my father, now struck like lightning through me—to what might refusal expose me? no longer bound to protect me, to what might passion, thus driven to despair, hurry his ardour? Yet have not I sworn, solemnly sworn, in the forest of Teesdale, to love, and to love for ever? Reflection was torture. I struck my hand with violence against my forehead, and remained lost in thought; then, as if awaking, started and exclaimed—"Yes, sir William too, who vowed he would be unto him a father, he would reproach my too-easy consent! ah! no, no, he would bid the daughter save the father: it is a child's duty to sacrifice love to filial piety, so shall thy years be crowned with honour, and a parent's blessing guard thee." Now I prayed ardently to Heaven, invoked departed saints to strengthen my resolutions; then rising from devotion, felt

felt awfully fixed. "Why should I hesitate? Adorned with every thing to captivate, this prince's mind is noble as his descent; how will the earl of Westmoreland rejoice over his child, whose powerful influence rescued her king, and saved her brave countrymen from destruction! will not the countess exult as she presses to her maternal bosom the duchess of Orleans? had he I lament, nay, must ever lament, lived, would she not have uttered a malediction as severe as the count D'Aranjeus against the fair Theresa? An outcast from my friends, I might, like her, have sought a grave unpitied and undistinguished in some distant land; to-morrow's sun shall shine on my nuptials—so shall I produce the happiness of others, whatever may be my own. Oh! can I bear to suppose a daughter of the heroic house of Neville refused to sacrifice every thing dear to her—for England!

"The night wears fast away; sure the moon is set," thought I, "it is so dark;

ah!

ah! now I see it is but a black cloud which crosses her orb; she emerges from it, so shall I to-morrow."

I now leaned upon the window, and throwing it open, stood to view the passing clouds as they scudded before the wind, which shook the ivy that shaded my casement; the owl shrieked from the battlements, and a sad, a bitter recollection rushed through my mind; such a night it was, when, led by Thomalin, we escaped the ruffian Scots, and sought the cell of the good Ambrose: now methought I saw the inverted prospect in the river, and marked with joy the friendly taper of the hermit; I still felt the supporting arm of my lover—I sighed most bitterly, and audibly exclaimed—"Behold, oh thou, I still, even in death, love what this sacrifice costs me; yes, if thy spirit is permitted to witness my sufferings, thou wilt know this trial is more severe than any other misery could inflict."

I heard

I heard my sighs re-echoed, my pulse beat quicker; I saw a figure, or rather, as my disordered fancy represented it, a phantom, which bore the exact image of him I was bewailing, and whose spirit at this moment seemed to appear to answer my invocation.—" Lady Cicely," it said, or seemed to say, and the voice my heart used to vibrate to seemed again to strike through it—my arm no longer supported my head—I fainted, and fell upon the floor; how long I remained in this state I know not, but at daybreak found myself in the arms of the duke, and attended by his servants.

"Ah, my lord!" I faintly said, "urge me no further—I meant to comply with your wishes; I even wished for morning to receive your proffered vows. But his spirit—blessed, blessed spirit, left the abodes of bliss to warn me of broken vows. Oh! no, my lord, I must not marry; the poor Cicely must seek the watery grave of

of her lamented lover; never, never more shall I clasp him to these arms; but we shall meet in heaven."

The duke imagined the agitation of my mind had unsettled my brain, and leaving me, I was put to bed; after a sleep of a few hours, I awoke more composed, though deeply dejected, certain I had seen the ghost of my departed lover; I arose, and found the prince ready to set forward upon his journey.

"Hear me," I cried, "my lord! nor search further into reasons I cannot unblushingly avow. I had resolved last night to grant your request, but now am I convinced our union would be horror; Cicely can never be wife to the duke of Orleans. I entreat your friendship, entreat you will restore me to my family, or, refusing, place me in a convent; there will I invoke a blessing on you; prayers and sighs are all that's left me."

"Wait," said he, fiercely, "wait my return from the slaughter of your country-

men,

men, whom you thus devote to destruction; hither, perhaps, I may lead in chains your rash, ill-advised king, Harry of Monmouth, who presumed to dispute, with a handful of soldiers, the right of Valois to the throne of France; *he* will doubtless thank you—yes, he will thank you for the interest you so kindly used in his favour."

"Ah! why this unnecessary cruelty?" I replied.

"Why, rather," rejoined he, "this cruelty on your side? did you feel the pangs of jealous love I feel, you would then know whom to pity; yet think not even you shall enjoy my misery; you also shall suffer—shut in the tower next the river, at leisure repent your wayward humours; there can no lover reach you: you shall not hate without a cause—this sword, when next you greet it, shall be dyed in blood, your kindred's blood—then hate—then curse."

I wept.—"Hate you, my lord! so may I meet

meet Heaven's mercy, as my prayers shall in your absence importune Heaven and all the blessed saints for your return in safety. Ah! no, no; alas! I feel I cannot, do not hate you; yes, Cicely shall join the name of Valois with that of Neville in her prayers; but let her not be praying for the murderer of her race; let not that hand be dyed with the blood of her father; kneeling at your feet, I solemnly conjure you to spare him, to guard the earl of Westmoreland, or a daughter's curse may fall heavily on him my heart would fain esteem and pity."

The duke, who was just before red with anger, on whose countenance was display-ed jealousy and every tormenting passion, melted almost into tears as he raised and pressed me to his bosom.

"Cicely," he said, in a tremulous voice, "you unman me! by what magic do you bewitch me? I must be gone whilst I feel the resolution. Power and ambition fade before you; at the hazard of my life will

will I guard the father of my love; grant me then this one embrace—it is a first, perhaps it may be a last one; my soul sadly presages, that again I shall not behold the towers of Bidet, or, beholding them, never shall I again view her who alone can render them dear to me."

"Presage not thus," I replied; "we shall meet again; and wear (tying round him a scarf, which had been the employment of my leisure hours at Bidet to embroider), wear, my lord, this, as a testimony of that friendship you perhaps will not accept—nay, you have refused; yet I entreat you, my lord, to wear this; yes, to wear it when at the head of the French army; when you oppose your prowess to the English, looking then on this scarf, shall you recollect the promise you have made, and turn aside the weapons that point at the father of the ill-starred maiden, whose sorrows shall be hushed as she remembers you are the guardian of the earl of Westmoreland."

"This

"This is indeed an invaluable present; can I forget the daughter of the earl of Westmoreland, forget her pious care?—it will preserve me, be a sacred talisman in the field of battle; it shall solace me in retirement, cheer me in the camp—and should I return; but I will urge no more—farewell, dearest of women, think on and confide in me." Again he pressed me to his bosom; then hastily quitted me, as if afraid to stay longer.

I went to the battlements of the tower, saw him mount, and quickly lost sight of him in the forest.

Here, my dear Matilda, let me reflect what were my feelings, when sitting upon the battlements which overlooked the Loire. Left a prisoner, yet without a force to guard me from the chance of war, perhaps a few hours, and I might be in the power of some new ruffian, impetuous as was the duke, without those qualities which rendered him the idol of the French,

who looked up to his valour for their safety and their honour.

Generous and brave, his soldiers adored him; his affability gained him the hearts of his dependants, who would have laid down their lives for his service; warm and impetuous in his projects, whatever he conceived was immediately executed; regarding neither difficulty or danger, possessing in his own mind uncommon resources, endowed with amazing strength and activity, and a soul which sought and braved the greatest hazards, he despised the weak and timid, expecting the same undaunted spirit should animate his domestics as fired himself. Early his own master, he had never known control, nor could he brook it. He knew no sovereign but his own will, and ruled a nation over which he did not reign.

What hopes of escaping from this impetuous prince! Whilst you read this, beloved Matilda, I will recollect the following

lowing events of a life so strangely varied; meanwhile may all the saints have you in keeping, prays your

CICELY.

END OF VOL. I.

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

PRINTED FOR

A. K. NEWMAN & CO.

AT THE

Minerva Press,

LEADENHALL-STREET, LONDON.

	£	s.	d.
Vaga, or a View of Nature, by Mrs. Peck, 2d edit. 3 vols.	0	15	0
Family Estate, or Lost and Won, by Mrs. Ross, Author of Modern Calypso, &c. 3 vols.	0	16	6
Lady Jane's Pocket, by the Author of Silvanella, 4 vols.	1	2	0
Discontented Man, by A. F. Holstein, 3 vols.	0	16	6
Barozzi, or the Venetian Sorceress, a Romance, by Mrs. Smith, Author of the Caledonian Bandit, &c. 2 vols.	0	10	6
Border Chieftains, by Miss Houghton, Author of the Mysteries of the Forest, 2d edition, 3 vols.	0	18	0
Celebrity, by Mrs. Pilkington, 3 vols.	0	15	0
Theresa, or the Wizard's Fate, 4 vols.	1	2	0
Dangerous Secrets, a Scottish Tale, 2 vols.	0	10	6
Baron of Falconberg, or Childe Harolde in Prose, by Bridget Bluemantle, 3 vols.	0	15	0
Treachery, or the Grave of Antoinette, a Romance, by Louisa Sidney Stanhope, Author of the Bandit's Bride, &c. 4 vols.	1	2	0
Miseries and Pleasures of Matrimony, or the First Husband and the Second, 4 vols.	1	4	0
Walter de Monbary, an Historical Romance, by Kramer, 2d edition, 4 vols.	1	0	0
A Father as he should be, by Mrs. Hofland, 4 vols.	1	4	0
The Bachelor's Journal, inscribed to the Girls of England, 2 vols.	0	10	6
Spanish Campaign, or the Jew, by Mrs. Meeke, 3 vols	0	18	0
Children of the Abbey, by R. M. Roche, 7th edit. 4 vols.	1	4	0